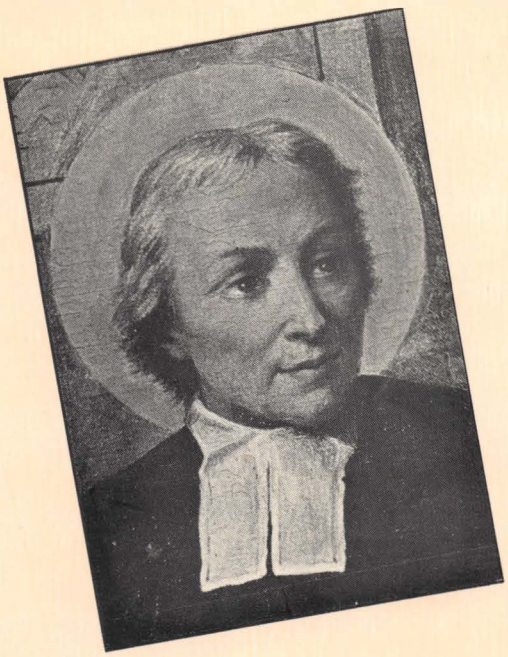
THE ORIGINS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF

Lasallian Pedagogy



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Lasallian Pedagogy

Yves Poutet

Translated by
Julian Watson FSC
Finian Allman FSC
Celsus Clark FSC
John Walch

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Published in 1997
by De La Salle University Press, Inc.
2504 Leon Guinto Street, Malate
Manila, Philippines

ISBN 971-555-186-6

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ABBREVIATIONS

AD: Departmental Archives

AM: Municipal Archives

ARCHIVES FEC: At Talence, 134 Cours Gambetta. They are the same as the Archives of the former District of Atlantique (Nantes, Bayonne and Bordeaux) and as a library of Lasallian studies.

BLAIN: Jean-Baptist BLAIN, La vie de Mr John Baptist de La Salle, 2 vol., Rouen, 1733 and CL 7 and 8.

CL: Cahiers lasalliens, Rome, 476 Via Aurelia. The number which follows the letters indicates the number of the volume.

CONDUCT OF SCHOOLS / CONDUITE DES ECOLES: The manuscript, said to be of 1706, published in 1951 by Brother Anselm, Doctor of Pedagogy, is titled: *Conduite des écoles chrétiens divisée en trois parties*. The first edition is that of 1720. It has for title *Conduite des écoles chrétiens divisée en deux parties*. The two versions have a preface. CL 24 reproduces both.

ÉCOLE PAROISSIALE / PARISH SCHOOL : *L'escole paroissiale ou la manière de bien instruire les enfans dans les petites escoles par un Prestre d'une Paroisse de Paris*, Paris 1654. The author is Jacques de Batencour, priest of Saint-Nicolas de Chardonnet. In 1685, he proceeded with a reworked and simplified edition, *Instruction méthodique pour l'Escole paroissiale*.

MS: Manuscript

Positio Barré: A work of Monsignor Giovani Papa, of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. It has 618 quarto pages, leading up to the process of beatification. *Positio super introductione causae et super virtutibus ex officio concinnata*. At the Vatican, Rome, 1970, printed in Italian.

Positio Roland: Approved by Monsignor Giovani Papa in charge of the cause of Canon Nicholas Roland, this *Positio* is in French. The Beatification took place in Rome on October 16th, 1974 in the presence of a thousand pilgrims, all very conscious of the importance of the newly named Blessed from the spiritual and pedagogical viewpoints.

Y. POUTET: *Le XVIIe siècle et les origines lasalliennes*, 2 Volumes, 1, 200 pages (in the collection at Talence), 1970.

Règles communes: *Règles communes des Frères des écoles chrétiennes* by Saint John Baptist de La Salle, manuscript of 1705, another of 1718. The first edition is of 1726. All three are reproduced in CL 25.

RIGAULT: Georges RIGAULT, *Histoire générale de l'Institut des Frères des écoles chrétiennes*, Volume I, *L'œuvre pédagogique et religieuse de saint J.-B. de La Salle*, Volume II, *Les disciples de saint J.-B. de La Salle dans la société du XVIIIe siècle*, Paris, Plon, 1937, 1938.

PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

The translation and publication of the following text of Yves Poutet are the results of the generous response of three Brothers and a lay associate from the District of Australia, Papua-New Guinea and New Zealand to my plea for assistance in making sure that such an important work became available to English-speaking readers. Brothers Julian Watson, Finian Allman Celsus Clark and Mr John Walch, all competent French scholars, contributed to the translation, while Brother Celsus Clark unified the different sections and produced the final version for the computer. Their task was to present a clear and readable translation while at the same time maintain the important references, notes and bibliography as in the original. After due consideration, it was decided not to offer an alternate bibliography of works currently in English since this research breaks so much new ground that there is very little available in English, except certain chapters of Alfred Calcutt's monumental work, *De La Salle: A City Saint and the Liberation of the Poor through Education* (De La Salle Oxford Publications).

The translators have not hesitated to change the structure of certain sentences of the original in order to be faithful to the content rather than to the form. This is particularly important because of the distinctive way in which the French language uses both the semi-colon and colon in comparison with English. The translators, and I as editor, have inserted occasional notes within the text in order to help better situate what is being said. Readers should not be surprised that certain material is used in more than one place in the text because of the major divisions within the work itself. Thus, for example, in treating some of the practices introduced by Anne Lecoeur and Françoise Duval into the schools of Roland's *Sisters of the Child Jesus* in Rheims in Chapter 5, the author will have occasion later to see how de La Salle and his Brothers adapted the same points to their day schools for boys. For a similar reason, Appendix 2 gives a more compete development to footnote 11 of Chapter 3, Part 3, concerning the *Memorandum on the reading of French*, because it helps the modern reader to understand how an educational pioneer justified his introducing of practices which were completely contrary to the received wisdom of the age.

This English edition acknowledges with gratitude the permission granted by the author, Frère Yves Poutet and the Editions Don Bosco, 75 rue Alexandre Dumas, 75020 Paris.

Brother Gerard Rummery, Editor

PREFACE

Christian pedagogy, that is to say the amount of thought that is put in by Christians about the education of the child, represents an intellectual and spiritual reservoir which is as important as it is little known or even neglected. The so long persistent paucity of research into the history of education, the extreme strength of secular currents of thought, and a certain timidity of Christians regarding the riches which have been handed on to them, have paradoxically combined to conceal, neglect, obfuscate and underrate the extraordinary scope of the initiatives due, in an on-going manner, to Christians—those who are Catholics, or those whose origins stem from the Reformation—in the domain of education where, in spite of so many unfortunate misleading misrepresentations, they have led the way forward. All this needs to be rediscovered. Such, therefore, is the object of this new collection, of which it is noteworthy and not surprising that the driving force has been the Salesians.

The work of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle is the first to be treated. This may seem strange given the fact that, thanks to the work of his sons, he is one of the best known. And yet a great deal remains to be done. A recent thesis[1] painstakingly shows how the *Dictionnaire de l'Instruction Primaire* of Ferdinand Buisson puts forward a certain picture of the founder of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, a picture which, while seeming to praise him, has at the same time enough belittling and anachonistic comments to cloud the picture considerably.

Besides, since de La Salle is one of the educational giants, his work deserves to be spoken of first to show how definitive and how important is the relevance and significance of Christian pedagogy to educational thought.This relevance and importance will also give those, who for too long have been content with anticlerical views and who have persisted in them, an opportunity of possibly correcting them.

Undoubtedly, no one is more qualified than Brother Yves Poutet for this inaugural publication. His remarkable and knowledgeable previous works have served to underline both his competence as a historian and the quality of his research. In this book, he puts forward a deep and original study of the thought and actions of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle and for this we must be grateful to him. In particular, he shows with abundant clarity how the *Conduct of Schools* links the spiritual and the secular, which means that La Salle's pedagogy is not only the pedagogy of a Christian, but a Christian pedagogy in the fullest sense of the term. La Salle's teaching is organized and unified around this connection of the spiritual and the secular. This is the basis which the author of this present work has interpreted in such a clear and scholarly way. The author shows especially the position of the illustrious priest of Rheims in regard to the pedagogy and practices current in his day, and he notes especially the unceasing attention and vigilant care that he brought to the formation of his teachers.

Hence, this first book of the series leads to the view that the series as a whole has a great deal to offer.

Authentic tradition in important matters is not doing again what others have done. It is rediscovering the spirit which did those things and which in other circumstances would do things quite differently.

PAUL VALÉRY

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written about Saint John-Baptist de La Salle such as an evaluation of his sanctity, a description of the Christian teacher from his point of view[2], his catechetical role[3], his way of organizing teaching as set out in his "Conduct of Christian Schools.[4] Yet, what is more rarely noticed is the close-knit unity which links the sacred and the profane in the Saint's writings about school. Now, this unity is not only fundamental, but is also as indestructible and inseparable as are the two sides of a single coin. It is above all this unity which the present study wants to evaluate in its presentation of *Lasallian Pedagogy*.

In view of an apt observation made by Professor Guy Avanzini, a "Christian pedagogy" will not be identified with "the pedagogy of Christians" for the fact that one is a Christian does not mean that the pedagogical practices adopted will be themselves Christian. Similarly, it is not right to bracket any or every teaching art or pedagogical method with what is a true pedagogy since this latter requires that it be based primarily on solidly established principles before being variously diversified as circumstances warrant.

One of La Salle's salient convictions was that example more than words possessed an irreplaceable winning power. As a result, for him, there could be no real Christian pedagogy without Christian teachers. Having said that, we are only at the starting point of a school pedagogy claiming to call itself Christian. To this must be added considerations as to aims, motivations, ways of acting drawn from Christian Revelation, that is to say from the Gospel and the Church's authentic teaching, whether this latter be specifically Catholic or generally regarded as Christian. Where Lasallian pedagogy is concerned, it is proper to speak of Catholic pedagogy. If we are to use the exact words of the author of the *Conduct of Christian Schools*, we should rather define it as "Catholic Christian"[5] in order to show that it does not intend of itself to embrace thereby the whole gamut of Christian pedagogies, nor to deny to Protestant or Orthodox pedagogies their right to be classified as Christian.

This teaching about pedagogy derives directly from the double dimension, profane and sacred, natural and supernatural, which Christianity recognizes in every human being. Moreover, the recommended teaching methods reflect the ideas and customs of an age as well as interested social milieux. Account must be taken of this, for it is a question of a pedagogy open to progress, capable of development with the advance of time and according to geographical regions. This present study is concerned only with France. It is limited to the period prior to 1719 with the death of the Founder of the "Brothers of the Christian Schools" but is sometimes extended to 1725, when Rome gave its official approbation to the Congregation especially dedicated to the teaching of the children of the masses.

An appreciation of Lasallian pedagogy is enriched by a knowledge of its origins. By origins, let us understand the personal contacts La Salle had with the founders of schools, who encouraged, prepared and advised him in his vocation of training teachers and of being responsible for gratuitous schools. These origins must be distinguished from the literary sources of Lasallian writings. These literary sources are most certainly very enlightening, but they constitute a huge area of study, which, although begun more than 25 years ago, is not yet complete.[6] By sources in fact, we understand the various texts which inspired La Salle or which led him to react. Often, as is the case with Charles Démia, the author as source, became at one time or another a borrower of a specific Lasallian custom.

An analysis of this complexity of sources would take us too far afield—and serve no real purpose—since it has been the subject of scrutiny in other works. We should not be astonished then if we do not see represented here the work of Saint Peter Fourrier, the Founder of the Congregation of Notre-Dame. His convent while under the rule of the enclosure, was able to guarantee for Rheims from 1638 the education of young boarders and to welcome gratuitously several hundred day pupils housing them in a kind of huge barn set up in the garden in the middle of a little forested area. This continued till 1676, the year when several classes opened in a completely new building.[7] As the religious sisters among the relatives of De La Salle, Marie (1627-1670), Jeanne (1626-1671), Jeanne-Remiette (1699)-1737), Jeanne Elizabeth (1706-1739) were members of the Community of the Sisters of Saint Peter Fourrier not before 1678 or after 1715,[8] it is more likely that it was through the intermediary of Canon Nicholas Roland (1642-1678) that La Salle knew of the Rule and Constitutions of the Congregation Notre Dame, first printed in French in 1673.[9] For similar reasons, neither the pedagogy of the Jesuits nor that of the Congregation of Christian Doctrine, neither that of the Clerks Regular of the Pious Schools nor that of the Ursulines etc., receive even minimal attention in the following pages. They represent sources more or less sporadic rather than elements in the real origins of a true Lasallian pedagogy. This latter was able to adopt harmoniously the special elements of differing pedagogies only because it had first assimilated their principles and tried out their practices.

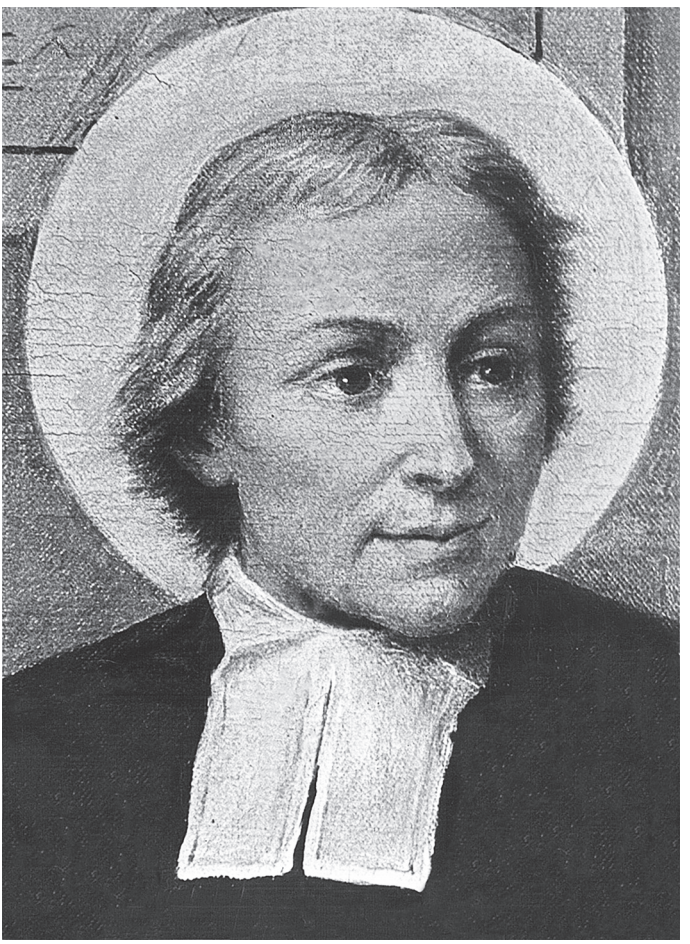
NOTES

1. P. Dubois
2. Cf. *Le maître chrétien selon saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle*, anon. (Brother Celse Pierre), Paris, Ligel, 1950; Frère Alphonse, *À l'École de saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle*, Paris, Ligel, 1952.
3. Brother Michel Sauvage, *"Catechèse et laïcat, mission du Frère enseignant dans l'Église*, section IV, Paris, Ligel, 1952, forming part of a doctoral thesis in theology; Brothers Michel Sauvage and Miguel Campos, *Jean-*

Baptiste de La Salle, Annoncer l'Évangile aux pauvres, le saint qui a démocratisé lécole, Paris, Beauchesne, 1977.

4. Gabriel COMPAYRE, *Histoire de la pedagogie*, Paris, s.d; *Histoire critique des doctrines de l'éducation*, Paris, Hachette, 3 ed. 1881; Ferdinand BUISSON and collaborators, *Dictionnaire de Pédagogie*, Paris, Hachette, 3rd edition, 1887, 2 vol.
5. See for example in *Les Devoirs d'un Chretien*, in continuous prose, Paris, 1703, pp. V, VI, VII.
6. Cf. Y. POUTET, *Le XVIIe siècle et les origines lasalliennes*, 2 vol. Rennes, 1970. A third volume remaining in manuscript form, and transposed into review articles has been specially directed towards the research for similarities or differences which point up the dependence or the originality of Saint J.B. de La Salle. See also Jean PUNGIER, *"Comment est née La Conduite des écoles"*, *Rome*, Mother-House of F.S.C.,1980,108p.
7. P.L. PÉCHENARD, *Histoire de la Congregation de Notre Dame de Reims*, Reims, 1886, p.191,197
8. CL 28, pp. LIV, LV and CL.41, p. 65.
9. P.L. PÉCHENARD, *op. cif.*, p.180.

Part 1



John Baptist de La Salle
and the teaching methods of his time

Chapter One

BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

From the pedagogical point of view the biography of John-Baptist de La Salle falls into two phases. In the first stage, he had no educational aims at all, but circumstances prepared him to involve himself in the spiritual and later the pedagogical formation of schoolteachers. In the second, he immersed himself completely in the world of the poor and established a community of teaching Brothers adapted to their mission as Christian educators of children of the ordinary people.

1. The years of formation

The eldest of a family of eleven children of whom four died at an early age, John-Baptist de La Salle was born at Rheims, probably in the present day Hôtel de La Salle (4 B, rue de l'Arbelète) on the 30th April 1651.

His mother's family was descended from a John Moët whom Charles VII ennobled on 2nd July 1446.[1] His father's family had a remote ancestor called Menault de La Salle, who was married at Soissons in 1484. His family were sometimes in trade, and at others in the magistrature, but had no claim to nobility. The "de," which sometimes indicates nobility, does not in itself signify class status. In this case the father's family name "La Salle" does not denote either the rank of squire or the possession of lands or a noble fief.[2] Correct usage requires that the "de" when detached from the family name is used only after a Christian name or a title of dignity such as "Monsieur" or "Canon" for example. It is therefore better to follow the rule rather than try to transcribe literally signatures which are often not totally formulated. The *La Salle family* of Rheims sometimes used the signature DeLaSalle, sometimes De Lasalle or De La Salle or even with an L the initial of the first name Louis, intertwined in the D. We will use *John-Baptist de La Salle* and *La Salle*.

His mother, Nicole Moët de Brouillet, heiress of a noble estate, renounced her nobility when she married Louis de La Salle, Counsellor of the Presidial of Rheims, that is to say a judge, often spoken of as a "noble man" because he was from upper middle-class stock. Married in August 1650, she was not quite seventeen years old; her husband was approaching twenty-five.

Their oldest son John-Baptist was thus put in constant contact as well with noble society as with the aldermen of Rheims, businessmen and counsellors of the king.

His studies began within his family. They did not put him into contact with either the *Masters of little schools with live-in pupils*, or the *Writing Masters*, and, more especially not with the parish schools catering for the poor. At the age often, he entered the College des Bons-Enfants which was dependent on the City, the

University and the Archbishop's office. His teachers were lay clerics, while the Chancellor who conferred the university diplomas was a distant cousin, Canon Pierre Dozet.

A year later he made his parents aware of his intention to consecrate himself to an even greater degree to the service of God. On the 11th of March 1662 he received the ecclesiastical tonsure in the chapel of the archbishop's house. On the 1st of April 1663 his college gave a theatrical presentation *The Martyrdom of Saint Timothy* with entr'actes of ballet movements with symphonic music. Was it the young person who had just received the tonsure who had the role of Pamphilus, as a poster announcing the presentation would seem to indicate? It is not impossible, though he was only in the fifth class, but if it is not him, then it is John-Baptist de La Salle (1649-1729) two years older, son of his uncle Jean (1624-1659), who would become a soldier of the king.[3] However that may be, his future spiritual director, Nicholas Roland,(1642-1678), today Blessed, student at the college of the Jesuits, more or less a rival school to the College Des Bons-Enfants shone nine years previously on the occasion of the coronation of Louis XIV (June 1654) by taking part successfully in a scenic presentation graced by the presence of members of the Court.[4] This type of involvement taught both young men elocution and the good manners of life in society.

On the 12th of April 1665 the efforts of John-Baptist de La Salle in the third class were rewarded by the second prize in **prepared speech** and an honorable mention in the **art of oratory**. In religious studies he did not receive either the prize or an honorable mention:Theodore Bazin, Charles du Mesgnil, Nicholas Mimin and François Caillambault were judged superior to him. Though he was brilliant at Latin studies he was **not yet** superior to the rest of his comrades in "Christian Doctrine."[5]

Since Canon Dozet had resigned from his canonry six months previously, La Salle was solemnly enthroned as canon on Thursday the 7th of January 1667 and was allotted Stall number 21 which was that of Saint Bruno, founder of the Carthusians after having been a reformer of the University of Rheims. Two years later Canon de La Salle completed his studies in humanities at the Bons-Enfants receiving the diploma of Master of Arts. He then commenced his studies in theology, first at Rheims then at Paris.

The Sorbonne and the seminary of Saint-Sulpice were chosen by reason of their outstanding reputation. But La Salle was able to profit from this for only eighteen months, which was nevertheless sufficient for him to form lasting friendships with eminent priests and with experienced people in educational circles.

The death of his mother in 1671 and of his father in 1672 meant that he was responsible for the guardianship of his brothers and sisters. He returned to Rheims and followed their studies diligently while continuing to prepare for his first degree and doctorate in theology.

Ordained priest in the Cathedral of Rheims on the 9th of April 1778 he soon found himself named executor of the will of Canon Nicholas Roland, his spritual director, who had died on the 27th of April. This man had not been able to achieve

his aim of organizing free schools for girls for the diocese of Rheims by obtaining the essential letters patent from Louis XIV. As of February 1679 La Salle succeeded. More than a thousand young girls from all areas of the city of Rheims took advantage of the new Institute whose main building at 48 rue de Barbâtre, still contains the precious remains of its founder in the crypt.

Some months later at the convent of the **Sisters of the Child Jesus,** La Salle met Adrien Nyel the manager of the schools for the people in Rouen, who had come to Rheims to establish free schools for boys in similar fashion. La Salle told him of the difficulties encountered by Canon Roland when dealing with the administrators of the General Hospital, resulting in his decision of not involving them in his project. He accepted the hospitality offered him by Canon de La Salle. The free schools for boys would be placed by preference under the **guardianship of parish priests** rather than the Poor Committee. Nyel and the fourteen year-old boy who accompanied him took charge of the school run by the parish priest of Saint-Maurice which had just lost its teacher. On the 2nd of October a second school in the parish of Saint-Jacques was provided with two teachers recruited by Nyel with the agreement of Canon de La Salle.

From that time on, the Canon's life was tied in with that of the teachers whom he lodged in a house near his (Christmas 1679), then in his own house beginning from the 24th of June 1681. In June 1682, the mayor and aldermen of Chateau-Porcien (Ardennes) asked him for two teachers. The small community, which was still being formed, had developed to the point where he was able to send them two teachers from the 27th of June to commence class on Tuesday the 30th of June.[6] Without doubt Nyel went with them since he had intended to go further north towards Guise and Laon. In any case he was the one with all the teaching expertise after more than twenty years of experience among the poor of Rouen.

While this was going on, on the 24th of June 1682 La Salle and the burgeoning community set themselves up in the rue Neuve, close to the present school of Saint John Baptist de La Salle situated in the rue de Contrai. A year later on the 16th of August 1683, in order to manage his time better and to share more in the life of the teachers who had no private income, Canon de La Salle retired from the office of Canon, which represented a capital of 40,000 *livres*, producing a revenue of two thousand *livres* a year, that is, more than ten times the salary of a teacher in the parish schools. In the course of the especially severe winter of 1683-1684 he distributed to needy folk the greater part of his own capital, offering thus the example of detachment from riches spoken of in the gospels.

2. The deepening of his call to teaching

While the initial group of teachers was gradually transformed into a real community whose aim was to serve the poor religiously and pedagogically, new teachers were recruited, trained and sent to other schools (Rethel, Guise, and Laon as well as different parishes of Rheims). But the young teachers wore themselves

out. On the 24th of March 1684 and the 26th of June 1685 La Salle took part in the funeral rites of young Brothers who died before their time (Cosme Boiserins, 29 years old and Jean Lozart, 34) The unhealthy atmosphere of the classrooms was suggested as possibly responsible.[7]

On the 20th of August 1685 at Rethel in the Ardennes, the Duke of Mazarin, lord of the area, signed a contract by which he agreed to fund two members of the community of the Brothers deemed to be "intelligent" and competent to train "seventeen good subjects," and capable of fulfulling "all the duties of the profession of schoolmaster." Having their expenses paid by the Duke, 17 subjects would be "formed and instructed in the right principles of Christian teaching as well as reading, writing and singing at the liturgical offices."[8] Even though this initial contract was not carried out in precisely this form later on, the Archives of the Duke of Mazarin consulted at Monaco proved that the accountant of the Duke continued until 1713 his financial support for both the Brothers and the initiatives of John-Baptist de La Salle to establish a **teachers' training college** for parish schools of rural areas.[9]

The concern of the founder of the Brothers to complete his pedagogical formation by profiting from the experience of **Charles Démia**, the priest responsible for the running of the schools of the diocese of Lyons, became obvious on the 4th of December 1687. La Salle had sent to him the equivalent of the monthly salary of nine teachers in payment for an important order for books which were for the use, at least in part, of the school of the parish of Saint Sulpice which Father Compagnon. who was the director, wished to hand over to the Brothers. The future Bishop of Chartres, Father Godet des Marais, residing at the Junior Community of the seminarists of Saint Sulpice, was made responsible for accepting them.[10]

Since he refused, on the advice of **Father Barré**, founder of the Sisters of the Child Jesus of Rouen and Paris, to limit the scope of his work just to the diocese of Rheims as the Archbishop Le Tellier had requested of him, La Salle arrived in Paris on the 24th of February accompanied by two Brothers to make himself available for work in the parish school in the rue Princesse. At Rheims, a Brother who had completed his classical studies, Brother Henri L'Heureux replaced the founder in the task of training young Brothers both in their religious life and in their teaching.

In Paris, the school in the rue Princesse run by Father Compagnon, assisted by various teachers and a foreman responsible for a workshop in hosiery, was a center where pupils could do apprenticeship work and which became a source of revenue. Changes were soon made to the running of the place: the hosiery section was closed after a few months. La Salle obtained an undertaking from the parish priest of Saint Sulpice that pupils of the school would cease to be perceived as altar servers available at short notice so that their presence could enhance the impact of baptism, marriage and funeral ceremonies.

Responsibility for other schools was soon assumed, first in the parish of Saint Sulpice and later in other areas. Pupils left the *Masters of Little Schools* and the *Writing Masters*. The situation became worse, and instigated legal proceedings with the *Chantre* of the cathedral and with the judicial system of the *Parlement* of

Paris. The intention was to ensure that the pupils enrolled at Lasallian schools would always be drawn from the families receiving alms from the parish. An educational system which refused to differentiate between rich and poor did not suit certain groups of teachers. Their antipathy translated itself into actions: they vandalized the school furnishings. Still La Salle did not yield even in the face of numerous fines. He took the view that it was not up to him to inquire into the wealth or poverty of families because it did not seem to him that doing good to all without charging them was something which merited criticism. This conflict followed him in various cities all his life.

3. The development of the Brothers of the Christian Schools

At the beginning of the winter of 1691, exhausting journeys on foot from Paris to Rheims, and the care of the communities established at Rethel, Guise and Laon forced La Salle to undergo six weeks of painful treatment from Helvétius, the king's doctor. The death of Brother Henri L'Heureux complicated the situation. which was made even worse by a lack of recruits. In an attempt to remedy this, a novitiate was set up in Paris in the municipality of Vaugirard. It was in buildings with adjoining gardens, which today have disappeared, but were situated where the present streets Copreau and Vaugirard meet.

On Wednesday *21 November 1691* on the Feast of the Presentation of Mary in the Temple, La Salle joined two Brothers, Gabriel Drolin and Nicholas Vuyart to form a group of founding members bound by a vow to *ensure the establishment of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools* by common consent "though only one should be left" or until the final realization of this work even if it became necessary for them to "beg for alms and to live on bread alone." Three years later, everything was better. Twelve Brothers with La Salle took a perpetual vow of obedience to the superior of the institute and to the " body of the society." Added to this were vows of "association: and of "stability" to "keep together gratuitous schools" even if they were obliged "to beg for alms and to live on bread alone in order to do this." It is clear that Nicholas Vuyart and Gabriel Drolin were among the signatories.

However, they were not released from their undertaking of 1691 because they had to take the necessary steps to ensure the recognition of the new religious congregation by letters patent from the king and from the Sovereign Pontiff, such recognition enabling them to spread not only throughout all the dioceses of France but even to other nations. This recognition did not occur until 1724-1725. In the course of the school year of 1698-1699, a training house for teachers from country areas with a school attached, frequented by children from the two neighboring parishes, was established in the rue de Lourcine (which has become rue de Broca) not far from the church of Saint Hippolyte. At the request of the priests of Saint Sulpice a young man, Antoine Forget, was trained as a teacher there for six months. with a view to being sent to Montreal in Canada to run a Sulpician school there.[11]

The Brothers were by now also at Chartres, Calais and Troyes.

In the holidays of September 1702 , in all probability, La Salle, contrary to his usual way of doing things, sent to Rome, of his own initiative, two Brothers who were also natural brothers: Gerard and Gabriel Drolin. Their mission was to set up a free school which would have all the Lasallian hallmarks, both pedagogical and apostolic, in the Pope's city. The first-named succumbed to homesickness and came back to France with the general idea of joining the Trappists. By contrast Gabriel Drolin, former director of the community of Calais, directed all his efforts to carrying out the vow made in 1691. He would finally obtain the honor of teaching in a "Papal School" and would return to France only after the pontifical approbation of the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* and the arrival in Rome at 506 via Ferrara of Brother Fiacre who replaced him in 1728.[12]

During the years 1696-1703, La Salle published the major part of the books which he intended for use by the children and teachers in his schools. In 1705 a second edition of several works was deemed necessary, more so because the Brothers then had schools in Calais (for the sons of seafarers), Avignon, Dijon, Rouen and Darnétal near Rouen, while other cities were also seeking the Brothers. The printer Antoine Chrétien, "the first printer-bookseller of the University of Paris" attests to an authorization from the king mentioning the majority of Lasallian works (the object of a special chapter later in this work) with the *Collection of small treatises for the use of Brothers of the Christian Schools* approved the same year in Avignon.[13] Nevertheless, the small number of Brothers, less than a hundred, did not justify the printing of either the *Common Rules*, or the *School Rules* later called *The Conduct of Schools* during the lifetime of John-Baptist de La Salle. They remained in manuscript form awaiting the day when they could be printed, but were still the subject of public and individual consultation. The evidence suggests that when he left France for Rome, Gabriel Drolin took them with him. The experience of eleven confreres bound with him by perpetual vows on the 6th of June 1694 was a continual source of enrichment of these works.

In the following years, the growth of the Brothers in various cities of France continued. Governors, managers of schools, mayors, parish priests and bishops all sought them. To cite only the lasting foundations: Marseilles (1706), Mende, Alès, Grenoble (1707), Versailles, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Moulins (1710), Les Vans (Ardèche, 1711) and a reformatory at Rouen (1715).

This growth, however, was not achieved without real problems.

4. The great difficulties of the time after 1709

For La Salle the years 1709-1714 were particularly trying. The difficulties began in the morning of the 6th of January 1709, the Feast of the Epiphany. The temperature in Paris from then till the end of the month was less than 15 degrees C below freezing point; sometimes lower than 20. Even in the capital in the family

surroundings of Louis XIV there was talk of more than twenty thousand deaths. The thaw did not begin until the 15th of March.[14] Without waiting for this improvement in temperature, which in fact did not bring with it any abundance of foodstuffs, La Salle, whose novitiate had been functioning in the property of Saint-Yon close to Rouen, recalled his novices to Paris near the rue de Sèvres in the present rue Saint John-Baptist de La Salle, where today there is an annex of an important post office.

La Salle himself was brought before the courts. In one instance by recourse to the Chantre and civil authorities, the *Masters of the little schools* and the *Writing Masters* had managed to remove from him any possibility of conducting a **training house for teachers** in Paris. In another case, at the urging of the son of Julien Clément, surgeon-obstetrician of the Court, Jean-Charles Clément, a cleric in minor orders, who promised in 1708 to make available the necessary funds, he began a similar center of pedagogical formation in the city of Saint-Denis not far from the capital. Though he was provided with a benefice from an abbey near Le Mans, Clément refused to honor his contract. This had disastrous consequences for La Salle in civil circles, his good faith being questioned by people who had friends at Court.

In 1710, a year of successful foundations at **Versailles, Boulogne** and **Moulins**, certain persons in Lyons, who were of the opinion that the Brothers of the Christian Schools being consecrated as they were to the service of free schools would be useful successors to the clerics of Démia's Seminary of Saint Charles to run the parish schools of the city, appealed to them but there was so much opposition that the venture did not begin. The next year the Brothers of Mâcon who had arrived in the city in 1709 had to leave there, probably because the Canon de Gorze who had invited them had not sought preliminary approval from the Bishop Mgr. de Tilladet.[15]

The years 1711-1712 were another milestone. La Salle had on several occasions previously asked the Brothers to elect one of their members to replace him as head of the Institute. He did not want an ecclesiastic among them even as superior because he was of the opinion that an elementary school master should devote himself entirely to the education of his pupils and not have his attention diverted by other "ministries." In his view, superiors who were not priests were quite capable of assuring guidance to their communities in spiritual, pedagogical and apostolic matters. But the church authorities of Paris having no previous experience in these matters to guide them, did not think so. The Brothers themselves wanted to keep La Salle as superior. In February 1711, La Salle decided to distance himself from the capital for several months. He visited far-flung foundations, passing through Avignon, Marseilles, Alès, Les Vans, Mende and Grenoble where he signed an undertaking to produce a new edition of his *Duties of a Christian.* He returned to Paris at the end of September.

On the 18th of February 1712 La Salle once again set off for the South of France having given to Brother Barthélemy, director of the novitiate, all the useful

guidelines to enable him to fill in during his absence. Without anything being said to him, this was to prepare him to be La Salle's lay successor as superior of the Institute. At Marseilles La Salle met with several setbacks. He had thought of joining Brother Drolin in Rome and taking a confrere to develop his school but Monsigneur de Belsunce kept him at Marseilles and gave him the impression that he would be given other schools. This project came to nothing. Other benefactors proposed that they would support the establishment of a novitiate in the region so that the teachers of the area would be better **acquainted with the language and popular usages of the countryside**. Brother Timothy was named Director. This proposal did not materialize since the "benefactors" wanted to impose their views on the way the Brothers lived.

After the publication of his condemnation in the wake of the Clément affair, which had caused the ruin of the training house for teachers at Saint Denis, La Salle thought that he was the cause of all the difficulties that had seemed to be multiplying for several months. He retired into the solitude of the Monts de la Sainte Baume and of the Dominican Monastery of Saint Maximin where he spent forty days in April-May 1713. Having returned to Marseilles and then to Mende, he took refuge in Grenoble in an attic of the community which ran a school at number 40 of the present-day rue Saint Laurent. He led a life of retreat and prayer. Two periods of time in a lonely place, where he replaced Father de Saléon, future Bishop of Agen in running retreats at Parmenie, brought La Salle into contact with "Sister" Louise, a holy shepherdess, who had a special devotion to a sanctuary called Notre-Dame des Croix.

A letter from the Brothers of Paris and the surrounding area dated the first of April 1714, invoking the vow of obedience he himself had made to "the body of the society," recalled him to take charge of his Institute. The situation was serious indeed, for ecclesiastical superiors had been nominated by various bishops to look after communities of the Brothers, while the Brothers themselves were trying to decide if it was opportune to submit their *Rules* for ecclesiastical approbation, once they had been published, with a view to obtaining their legal recognition by letters patent. Since he was not totally convinced that the letter of the first of April 1714 really represented the "body of the society," La Salle did not obey at once. He sought the counsel of Sister Louise and had recourse to prayer and in spite of the friends who wished to keep him at Grenoble, (Father de Saléon parish priest of Saint Laurent, Sisters of the Visitation whose convent today houses the Museum of Dauphiny) he then decided to set off for Lyons, and then to Paris where he arrived on the 10th of August 1714.[16] His way of greeting Brother Barthélemy reflected his determination to see the Brothers choose one of their own to replace him as Superior. He simply said "Here I am; what do you want me to do?"

The following year the Novitiate once again left Paris for Saint Yon. Brother Barthélemy was still the director. La Salle continued to counsel the Brothers, composed the *Meditations* which were for their use, explained to the novices his *Method of Mental Prayer*, revised his *Conduct of Schools* in the light of his personal experience gained by visiting schools, encouraged the teachers, listened to their

expectations and even replaced one of them when he sent him away on a confidential matter (as was the case with the director of the school of Saint Laurent at Grenoble) or more often replaced a teacher who was ill. Listening to the advice of parish priests and bishops had crystallized his pedagogical ideas. The differences in customs of various areas of France, more obvious in those times than today between Paris and the Provinces, also between the North of France and the south of the Loire had broadened his concepts and made it evident that he should leave to his Brothers a teaching style that was open and flexible, capable of adaptation.

Various visits to the schools of Rheims, Boulogne and Calais and the preparation for a *General Chapter* for the year 1717 with the aim of finalizing the Common Rule destined to be later approved by Rome, broke the monotony of retirement, a period which saw him afflicted with severe rheumatism. Finally, after two days of retreat on the Sunday and Monday of Pentecost 1717, the Chapter began by the election of the Superior General to succeed the Founder. Brother Barthélemy was elected on the 18th of May by the sixteen Brothers Directors present. La Salle remained a privileged adviser. Following a request of the Chapter, he helped to perfect the Common Rule for the community and schools. More and more weakened by his illness he died at Saint-Yon on Good Friday the 7th of April 1719. His mortal remains are now in Rome at the chapel of the Mother House of the Brothers, 476 via Aurelia. His congregation was to be approved by letters patent of Louis XV signed in September 1724 but registered only on the 2nd of March 1725 in the *Parlement* of Normandy, and by the Papal Bull of Benedict XIII of the 26th of January 1725 registered at Rouen on the 12th of May 1725. As the letters patent concerned only the house of Saint Yon, although they were valid for all its foundations, the Brothers of the Christian Schools were given the nickname "**Yontains**", and Voltaire in his poem *The Brothers with Big Hats* makes a joke of this word by calling them "Ignorantins," a term which had such currency that the manager of schools in Guyenne begged them to come, asking one of the Superiors to send him "some of those knowledgeable ignorantins."[17]

In 1720 a first edition of the *Conduct of Schools* was published. Brother Bernard began to compile a biography of John-Baptist de La Salle in order to gather as many testimonies as possible. In 1723 the Benedictine, François-Elie Maillefer, drafted at Rheims a biography inspired by the family of the deceased. He modified it a little in 1740, and in 1733 Canon John-Baptist Blain published at Rouen the first exhaustive biography in two large quarto volumes, having in mind his subject's future beatification. This took place only in 1888, while the canonization became the occasion of outpourings of world wide joy in 1900. Considering the universal importance and Christian value of the pedagogical principles established by La Salle, Pius XII proclaimed him "special patron of all educators of the young" on the 15th of May 1950. This was affirmation that the importance of his work belonged to all times and not merely to the epoch of Louis XIV.

NOTES

1. CL 26, p. 164.
2. CL 26, p. 164.
3. CL 41, p. 151, No 2.
4. *Positio Roland*
5. Y. POUTET, *Le XVII^e siècle et les origines lasalliennes,* Vol I, p. 149, and a document in CL 41/2 pp. 160-161.
6. *les lettres de saint J.-B. de La Salle,* Paris, 1954, p. 367.
7. CL 40, pp. 86-87.
8. *Bulletin des Frères des écoles chrétiennes,* April 1960, p. 59; and Y. POUTET, *Le XVII^e s., op. cit.,* Volume I pp. 700-703.
9. Y. POUTET, *ibid.,* pp. 704-706.
10. CL 40, p. 218.
11. Y. POUTET, *op. cit.,* Volume II, p. 342.
12. Gabriel Drolin, born at Rheims in the parish of Saint James on the 22nd July 1664, died at Auxonne in 1733.
13. Cf. CL 15.
14. François BLUCHE, *Louis XIV*, Paris, 1986, p. 788.
15. Y. POUTET, *op. cit.,* Volume II, p. 119.
16. CL 8, p. 119.
17. F.E.C. Archives, Talence, The Bordeau File 1743.

Chapter Two

THE EPOCH OF SAINT JOHN-BAPTIST DE LA SALLE

After the chronological table reflecting the mood of the era, there is an analysis of some of the pitfalls to be avoided when speaking of schools at the end of the reign of Louis XIV.

1. Short chronology of the epoch

1680-1720: There was a "crisis of the European conscience" (Paul Hasard) before the rationalist era called "the Enlightenment."

1685: The Edict of Nantes was revoked. This was followed by the closing of the Protestant schools and academies.

1698: Louis XIV passed a law forbidding children under fourteen being put to work so that they could attend school. The edict was not well observed, and would be proclaimed again in 1724. At the same time, the deliberate persecution of Protestants became less intense.

1702: The Camisards [i.e. Calvinists protesting against oppression. *Translator's note*] revolted in the Cévennes.

End of 1709-beginning of 1710: There was a famine due to the severity of the winter.

1715: Louis XIV and Fénelon both died. The latter was the author of the treatise on the education of girls. He was the archbishop of Cambrai, and Bossuet's opponent in the quarrel over Quietism or false mysticism.

1718: The first works of Voltaire appeared. He was a former pupil of the Jesuits, and the author of literary and philosophical works and of lampoons.

1719: Saint John-Baptist de La Salle died at St Yon, near Rouen, at the age of sixty-eight.

2. Some pitfalls to be avoided when speaking of schools in the 17th century

Many errors arise unwittingly from projecting present day experience onto a past three centuries old. Words commonly enough have been misunderstood because, over a period of time, their meanings have changed.

A. Projection of the present onto the past

On 28th March 1882 laws were passed allowing only secular teachers in the public schools; in 1904 members of religious congregations were forbidden to teach anywhere in France; in 1905 the separation of Church and State took place. Since the enactment of these laws, the religious and secular domains have been entirely separated, with a slight exception for Alsace-Lorraine. At the time of John-Baptist de La Salle they were certainly autonomous but not independent. Many links established bridges between them. They worked together. They overlapped according to a concept of the human being which did not consider his destiny *post mortem* as negligible or hypothetical. God was envisaged both as the creator of the secular world which is observable by science as well as of the supernatural world. Consequently, the future of every child was viewed from much wider perspectives.

While bishops today are only Church officials, at least in their specific duties, in the 17th century they were very heavily involved in temporal matters. Once they were nominated by the king, accepted or approved by pontifical Bulls from Rome, and then consecrated, they enjoyed the resources of their bishoprics as lords of the diocese entrusted to them. As lords they handed down judgments in serious and less important matters. When they intervened in school matters, they did so as both spiritual and temporal rulers. Together with the civil authorities they were responsible for public welfare work.

Their activity regarding schools was as much secular as religious, for the king willingly delegated to them the task of seeing that the directives of the State were applied in what concerned instruction, education and assistance to the poor. Let us not imagine, then, the world of schooling in the 17th century as being the same as that experienced today. The religious dimension was always associated with it even if certain establishments tended to neglect it.

B. Avoiding the misinterpretation of some words

Almoner: He was an ecclesiastic who distributed alms. The Grand Almoner named by the king was neither the king's confessor nor a priest whose duty it was to provide religious services for the Court. His duty was to distribute the aid, help and relief which the king destined for hospitals, for works we would describe as charitable, and for the needy in general. His assignment also included investigating and suggesting suitable solutions for the insufferable social situations generated by extreme poverty, sickness and famines. The task of assistance to the poor was considered as an essential element of the Church, and every Catholic, the king included, was anxious to participate in it as a member of the Church.

Poor Committee: This was the group of administrators, sometimes set up by the *Company of the Blessed Sacrament* [cf.below], which was charged, in conjunction with the General Hospital, with the grants and help destined for the poor. The Committee played the role. more of less, of today's Social Security or Welfare.

On this model *Schools Committees* were set up in several towns. Examples were Lyons, where one was established by Charles Démia, and Grenoble where a group of zealous clerics appealed to John-Baptist de La Salle to send them some of his *Brothers of the Christian Schools*.

Chantre: The canon responsible for the choir school and the altar servers of a cathedral bore the title of *Grand Chantre* or simply of *Chantre*. He supervised the education of the children willing to enhance the splendor of the religious ceremonies. By extension he exercised authority over all the teachers in primary schools, in which the programme usually stipulated a quarter of an hour's catechetical instruction each day. He verified their ability to teach and the educative value of their behavior. When the role of the *chantre* extended to all the primary schools of a diocese he tended to assume the title *écolâtre* [school-superintendent *Translator*].

In Paris, the *parish priests* succeeded in getting the *Parlement* to recognize their right to manage their parish schools without reference to the *chantre*. This independence was also fairly generally acknowledged in the other towns.

Social classes: In the age of Louis XIV society was organized according to ranks or orders rather than according to economic classes. Each of the three orders, Nobles, Clergy and the Third Estate, had its poor and its rich. The expression "shamefaced poor" i.e. those ashamed to make known their needs, was applied, for the most part without too much scorn, to members of the bourgeoisie or the nobility who did not have sufficient means to enable them to live without begging in times of sickness or old age, or even because of a reversal of fortune.

Company of the Blessed Sacrament: This was a pious, apostolic association of priests and lay people. They aimed at changing the culture and structures of society and making them more Christian. It seems that John Baptist de La Salle did not join it. But Charles Démia was one of its most enthusiastic members. The Company was founded in Lyons in 1631 and introduced in Paris in 1633. It spread widely, but was then outlawed in 1666. Even so it was still flourishing in Lyons in 1696... Rather than exert influence in its own name, it acted through its members.

Écolâtre: see Chantre.

School: In the 17th century the word "school" was commonly used to designate what we call a *classroom*. Numerous statistical errors in the history of schools have arisen from this change in meaning. To refer to a school establishment, the 18th century spoke of the *schools*, writing, for example "so-and-so attends the schools."

To write "the School" was to refer to Thomism (the philosophy and theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas) as it was expounded at the Sorbonne, that is in a form that was simplified and subsequently distorted. Montaigne refers to this overly abstract *School* in his *Essays*.

By *charity schools* is understood *parish schools* under the protection of the parish priests. They were gratuitous but reserved to the children of families listed on the *Poor Register*. This list was intended to facilitate the distribution of material and financial help to the poor in the name of the fraternal love which all Christians owe to their neighbors.

The word "charity," in those days, was understood only in the sense of "love" and of the effective setting up of what the word "solidarity" means today, that is of a situation in which all human beings are in fact bound to one another by reason of their inclination to come together. This is inherent in every social and political structure. *Solidarity* means *charity* in the 17th century sense, that is love manifested in actions. The word "solidarity" does not exist either in Furetière's 1690 *Dictionary* nor in the 1710 edition of the dictionary of Peter Richelet from Champagne.

The parish "charity schools" accepted some children able to contribute to the costs of schooling. But the schools which depended on the Poor Houses, which were linked to the offices of the Poor Committee, accepted mainly orphans, abandoned children and children from poor families.

Often these schools divided their timetables into periods of study and periods of work. The latter were a source of revenue as well as a kind of pre-apprenticeship.

The *little schools* with a small "l" were regulated by a body of practitioners in the form of an association entitled *Masters of educational establishments and of the little schools.* They were under the supervision of the *Chantre*. Most often, they used the individual method, for it was more a matter of showing each child how to read, how to write, and how to count rather than of rapidly teaching a whole group to read, write and count. In theory, they were gratuitous only for the poor, but the teachers preferred not to be encumbered with them and, in fact, hardly any poor pupils attended them.

By "*Little schools*" with a capital "L," the *Little schools of Port-Royal* are alluded to. It was here that Pascal and Racine studied. Schools is in the plural for the word is used in the sense of "classes" as was then the custom. "Little" is used in the sense of small in numbers. The pupils were boarders who usually came from noble or bourgeois families. Their studies were not at the elementary level as they embraced a solid study of Latin and Greek as well as rhetoric, logic, mathematics and moral philosophy. It is, then, quite improper to make comparisons between these "Little schools" and the "little schools" of the lower classes. They approximated more to colleges and sometimes to universities, without seeking to challenge either. According to Augustine Gazier they did not last more than fifteen years, and, by their own decision, never had many more than twenty pupils. This did not stop the cultured "solitaries" who ran them, nor their publications, from stimulating many of the learned discussions of the time and of subsequent years.

The Attested Writing Masters were experts in the courts. They taught perfect writing and prepared children to enter college, entrance to which was usually fixed at nine years of age. They also taught grammar and Latin, together with reading and arithmetic. And they barred the *Masters of the little schools* from encroaching on this less elementary programme. Their courses attracted fees. Their method was individual even if they gathered several pupils together at the one time. They prepared their charges for employment as copyists, secretaries, clerks of court, public scribes, calligraphers and bookkeepers.

Founding: This was to provide the necessary funds to ensure that a work was viable and could develop. The notion of financial resources was always included

in the use of this word. Otherwise, there had to be talk of "opening" or "creating" or "establishing" a school or some institution. La Salle "founded" no school whatsoever. The "founders" or "foundresses" were always benefactors or towns or parish priests or bishops. Most often La Salle did not even open new schools. The truth is that schools were quite numerous in France. A decree of Louis XIV had even forbidden the opening of a new school within 180 toises [1 toise=6.5 ft or 195 cm.-Translator's note] of an existing one. La Salle's essential role consisted in providing schools for the people with teachers and methods suitable to their needs.

Letters Patent: These were letters from the king, registered in the *Parlement* and conferring legal status on an institution. They were never granted unless there was sufficient capital to ensure an annual income capable of making the undertaking viable. The capital could be tied up in real estate.

Parish: In the 17th century, the *parish* was a civil administrative division as well as an ecclesiastical one. It must be remembered that the state registers (births = baptisms, marriages and deaths) were kept by the parish priests, who, consequently, were considered government officials answerable to the civil powers as much as to Episcopal ones.

Parish meetings were sometimes meetings of *notables*, and sometimes of the *fabric*, that is, of the persons in charge of the administration of the material possessions of the Church. At the head of every *fabric* or committee of management was a church warden whose duty it was to report to the parish priest and to carry on the administration according to his advice.

The *notables* were *elected* by all those eligible for the "taillage" tax. The *church wardens* were *elected* by the parishioners. Corneille was the church warden in his parish.

As an administrative area, the parish was used as a territorial framework for levying taxes, for the registration of the population, and, in 1789, for drawing up the "registers of grievances" in view of the Estates General.

One can guess how this collection of social and political realities made daily life difficult for Protestants especially after 1685, the year of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Those won over to the Catholic Church were commonly called *New Catholics*. Some "royal" schools, so called because they were financed by the king, were set up, both before and after this date to educate the children of "former" Protestants.

La Salle was born into a deeply Catholic family connected with the distinguished and cultured society of the nobility and bourgeoisie. His early upbringing did not prepare him directly to become concerned with the education of the children of the masses and the formation of their teachers. But, gradually, he was drawn into the varied aspects of the school scene. His apprenticeship began in his own family when he was the guardian of his sisters and brothers at the time when he was completing his theological studies.

Chapter Three

LA SALLE MATURES THROUGH THE GUARDIANSHIP OF HIS BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

The works of Brother Leon de Marie Aroz about the tutelage of Canon de La Salle (CL28 to 31) [CL = Cahiers lasalliens, official publications of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. *Translator's note*]) completed by the accounts regarding the administration of the last testament of his father (CL 32 to CL 34) give a clear idea of what the future founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools learned about practical psychology and pedagogy in the course of the years 1672-1676. In his last will and testament of the 8th of April 1672 his father (who was a counsellor of the Presidial of Rheims), Louis de La Salle, proposed a system of tutoring to help John-Baptist in carrying out his last wishes. Nothing was to be done without the advice of Perette Lespagnol, widow of John Moët, Lord of Brouillet, his maternal grandmother, Nicolas Moët, Lord of Brouillet, counsellor of the Presidial of Rheims, his uncle on his mother's side[1]; and of Simon de La Salle, a middle-class citizen of Rheims, and of Antoine Frémin, a counsellor of the king, an elected representative of the city of Rheims, husband of Marie de La Salle, who were uncles on his father's side. Their ages were 57, 42, 54 and 58 years respectively. They were persons of experience and influence.

The children who had to be looked after by John-Baptist at the beginning of his period of guardianship were aged as follows: two years old (Jean-Rémy, born in 1670), six years old (Pierre, born in 1666), eight years old (Jean-Louis, born in 1664), thirteen years old (Jacques-Joseph, born in 1659), sixteen years old (Rose-Marie, born in 1656), eighteen years old (Marie, born in 1654).[2] Their guardian supervised their education closely for four years. From 1665 the family no longer lived in the Hôtel de La Cloche, today called Hôtel de La Salle, 4 A rue de l'Arbelète but they lived in the rue Sainte Marguerite in a large house which was destroyed during the wars of the twentieth century.[3]

Marie de La Salle, the oldest of the children, studied Greek and Latin. She could read written music and being a sparkling eighteen-year old enjoyed an active social life. She had a pleasant singing voice and liked to sing accompanying herself on the tuorbe[4] as they called it in the household, a sort of lute which had the strings attached to two frets to separate the bass and treble notes more easily.

Facing up courageously to the task of running the household during the illness and death of her father while John-Baptist was still in Paris at the seminary of Saint-Sulpice, she kept him up to date for a month about matters whose care she shared with her father during his last days. On the 23rd of June 1672 she went to

the rue du Marc, to the house of their grandmother Perrette Lespagnol, in company with the youngest of the children, Jean-Rémy who was only twenty months old, and whom Canon de La Salle could hardly care for properly. For his part the ecclesiastical tutor kept a close eye on the accounts. He gave Marie everything that a blossoming young girl needed for her personal use: three pairs of shoes in two years, clothes, lace, taffeta, embroidery, dresses and various types of lingerie, and as much spending money as was necessary. This probably was partly spent buying music and books, though it is difficult to have precise details.[5] John-Baptist was well acquainted with what seemed indispensable to the life and education of a young woman of the middle class and aristocratic society of the time. These expenses totaled 432 *livres* over four years, which amounted to 108 *livres* a year; in other words the equivalent of the pay of an ecclesiastical schoolmaster. There was in expenses other than board the equivalent of the sums necessary just for food. This assuredly represented a considerable expense, but was it not necessary to keep up one's place in society and not lower standards?

Marie de La Salle would later marry John Maillefer a middle-class merchant of Rheims, who was a most praiseworthy man as evidenced by the eulogies of him in the Journal written by Henri Bremond.[6]

Rose-Marie, called Rosette by her friends, left the family home while John-Baptist was at the Seminary of Saint-Sulpice.[7] Once he had become the guardian of the family he wrote many details in his accounts. However, he allowed others, more expert in what girls would need, decide what they needed to buy and limited himself to reimbursing them for expenses such as: cotton, currants, sugar, "small baskets to put everything in," manchester, a pair of stockings... He reserved to himself, however, the purchase of necessary books spending the equivalent of a month's salary of a schoolmaster. He reimbursed her for the price of a writing desk that she had chosen herself.[8] Having joined a group of cloistered sisters, the canonnesses of Saint Augustine in the convent of Saint-Etienne, Rose de La Salle experienced a first severe setback to her health in 1675 following an injudicious health treatment.Then quite suddenly in an attack that lasted for ten hours, she died on the 21st of March 1681 when she was not quite twenty-five years old.[9]

Born in 1659, Jacques-Joseph de La Salle, commonly known as Joseph was not yet thirteen years old in April 1672. He went to the College des Bons-Enfants. The account for his schooling noted expense of slightly more than four *livres* for ribbon, note paper and "the months of schooling" from the 26th of October to the 31st of December 1672. It is certain that his brother the canon kept a close watch on the development of his studies.

Tuition for day-pupils at the College des Bons-Enfants was not free but cost only three shillings every two months. In June 1764 thirty shillings were outlayed for the printing of notices announcing that the pupils would be defending their theses. In July 1676 the young graduate, who would not be seventeen until September, defended his general theses for the degree of master of arts, which gave him the right to teach. He paid 15 *livres* to M.Picot, who was professor of philosophy and

organizer of the examinations. He had the gown for the ceremonies made for himself which cost 9 *livres*, then spent 12 *livres* on Colin, the engraver, who prepared two hundred specially decorated copies of his theses, that is, the propositions he had to defend. He paid another 24 livres to the printer Multeau for the completion of this work. On the 5th of October he gave another 20 shillings to the porter of the college, and 3 *livres* for the person who had decorated with rich tapestry hangings the hall where the defense of theses was to take place.[10]

In observing closely the studies of his brother Joseph, Canon John-Baptist de La Salle was often reminded of his own studies. It goes without saying that there were many exchanges of ideas between them on the way teachers taught, on the behavior of pupils and on the value or otherwise of various aspects of the programmes.

Soon after obtaining his degree of master of arts, the new graduate went to Paris to the Abbey of Saint-Geneviève, to follow his vocation of a canon regular (of the order known as Génovéfians). After a few months as a postulant he took the religious habit, completed a year's novitiate and was adjudged then fit to pronounce his vows at the beginning of October 1678. Since the taking of his vow of poverty made him totally dependent on the Order, he had to supply the sum of fifteen hundred pounds to compensate for this.[11] He kept on with his studies, finished his degree in both civil and ecclesiastical law and then his doctorate in theology. At the age of 29 he was a teacher of theology at Blois and parish priest of the parish of Saint-Martin. Named parish priest and prior of Chauny in 1714 he died there in 1723 with the reputation of having been an exceptional religious.[12] The fact that he was a long way from Rheims and from Paris after the completion of his studies meant that he could not involve himself any more with his brother John-Baptist in his pedagogical reflections.

John-Baptist was closer to their brother Jean-Louis, born in 1664. He was his godfather, and so he assumed a double responsibility: that of guardian in secular matters and of godfather in religious matters. Jean-Louis was only seven years and three months old in April 1672 and was too young to go to the College des Bons-Enfants. Therefore, the expenses for "schooling" noted in the accounts for instruction refer to the sums outlayed to the schoolmaster who lived in the house or to the writing master who completed the tutoring of Jean-Louis in reading, writing and arithmetic that had been begun within the bosom of his family. From the 22nd of April 1672 to the 1st of January 1673, schooling, buttons, shoes, and other small necessities cost twenty-six *livres*. From the 8th of November to the 31st of December 1673, a suit and teaching expenses had to be paid for at a cost of twenty-four *livres*. But in 1674 the matter of home schooling was finished, for expenses this time were for "a month of class." Jean-Louis was now at the College des Bons-Enfants.[13]

His guardian had a jerkin made for him between the 8th of January and the 2nd of April. He was in the sixth class. In 1678, when he had gone up four classes, he completed his studies in grammar. Rhetoric took up his time in the top class in the school year of 1678-1679. There followed two years of philosophy, the study of dialectic, logic, ethics and physics. An inspection of his previous school results

proved that he was really well enough versed in Latin, Greek, grammar and rhetoric to be able to undertake this last part of his studies leading to the degree of master of arts. On the 8th of November 1682,[14] the new graduate was admitted to the seminary of Saint-Sulpice in Paris where his priestly vocation enjoined him to undertake at the Sorbonne the highest studies in theology available at the time. These involved lectures, case studies, and a learning of liturgical ceremonies as well as pastoral catechesis under the direction of eminent teachers who were in constant contact with the clergy of the biggest parish in Paris. He spent three and a half years there. His departure from the seminary is recorded as the 15th of March 1686.

Ordained priest on Saturday the 31st of May 1692 by the Bishop of Soissons in the chapel of the Sisters of the Child Jesus of Rheims, Jean-Louis de La Salle, having now his doctorate in theology from the Sorbonne, became canon of the cathedral of Rheims on the 20th of October 1694 two days after the death of Canon Charles Moët, whose prebend number 14 was transferred to him by Bishop Le Tellier.[15] His acceptance in line with Jansenist thinking of not quite orthodox views which his older brother would have no part of did not prevent John-Baptist from choosing him as the executor of his will, as supporter of his schools at Rheims and from having an unshakeable confidence in his devotion to poor children. Extremely learned, a major office-bearer of the Archdiocese of Rheims, teacher at the major seminary, benefactor of the Cathedral chapter, Jean-Louis grew spiritually a long way from John Baptist and died five years after him in 1724.

In April 1672, Pierre de La Salle was only six years old. He was taught by a schoolmaster whom John-Baptist paid each month. The education account does not tell us if the went to the College de Bons-Enfants when he was nine or ten years old (1675 or 1676).[16] In fact, it was probably in October 1676 that he began his studies at the college where he spent eight years going from sixth class to his second year of philosophy. He left Rheims in 1684 to go the the University of Orleans to prepare for his degree in law which he obtained in August 1686.

From 1682 he no longer lived with his older brother because his sister Marie and his brother-in-law Jean Maillefer decided to take him away from the company of the poor school masters whom John-Baptist had as guests in his house, judging their presence to be detrimental. So John Baptist did not supervise his studies except from "little school" to the first year of the College des Bons-Enfants (the year of 1681-1682).[17]

Apart from the experience of being guardian of his brothers and sisters, it was the work of Canon Roland which put John-Baptist de La Salle in contact with the education of girls.

NOTES

1. CL 28, p. LVII.
2. All their dates of birth and death are in CL 41/1 p. 86.
3. CL 41/1 pp. 106-107.
4. CL 28, p. XLVI and *Dictionnaire by Champenois Richelet.* Today we usually say *"téorbe"* or *"théorbe."*
5. CL 28, p. XLVII.
6. Published thanks to the work of H. Jadart.
7. CL 29, p. 61v.
8. CL 28, p. XLV.
9. CL 27, p. 43.
10. CL 28, p. L, and folios 142, 147.
11. CL 41/I p. 325.
12. *Ibid.,* p. 331.
13. No one was admitted to the class of philosophy unless he was judged proficient in Greek and Latin, grammar and rhetoric, cf CAULY *Histoire du Collège des Bons-Enfants,* pp. 394 ff. In the class of philosophy, dialectic, logic, ethics and physics studies were spread over two years. Jean-Louis did his philosophy strand from 1679 to 1681.
14. Y.POUTET, *Le XVIIE Siècle et les origines lasalliennes,* Vol I p. 644.
15. Archives of the Priests of Saint-Sulpice, *Liste des anciens élèves du seminaire,* 1642-1692, p. 96. cf. 41/I p.96. Cf. CL 41/I, pp. 141, 230.
16. CL 30, folios 173 to 181.
17. CL 27, p. 135.

Chapter Four

THE EDUCATIONAL LEGACY OF CANON NICOLAS ROLAND

La Salle would most probably never have busied himself with popular schools (i.e. schools for the children of the masses) had not Nicholas Roland (1642-1678) put his foot, as it were, in the stirrup. In his *Mémoire des commencements.*[1] La Salle implicitly admitted this to be the case. Nicholas Roland, now Blessed (as from 16th October, 1994) was the Founder of the Sisters of the Child Jesus, a teaching congregation of diocesan right (for the dioceses of Rheims and of Chalons-sur-Marne plus the mission to Tchad). Before attending the Jesuit College of Rheims, where he starred in a theatrical production, and then studying in different ecclesiastical seminaries of Paris, he had, while still quite young, **learned to read on the lap of his aunt**, Françoise Beuvelet. Eager to know more he asked and was granted permission to attend "the little schools" where he made rapid progress.[2] Since his godfather, Matthew Beuvelet, was a priest of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet, a community, one of whose members, Jacques de Batencour (sic) had published in 1654 a book, the fruit of a long experience in parish schools, Nicholas was aware even in those days of the first beginnings of a school pedagogy. It would be much later in reading *L'Escole paroissiale*, that he would study the "raison d'être" and the methods of this same pedagogy.

The Parish School

His student days in Paris (1660-1663) allowed him to become acquainted with three teaching communities of women whom the executors of his will would regard as suitable to be chosen by the school mistresses of Rheims as guarantors of their future as teachers if their own community failed to obtain Royal Letters Patent. These were the Daughters of Saint Geneviève, the Sisters of the Cross, and the Sisters of Christian Union of the rue de Charonne in Paris. A six-month retreat at Rouen, in 1668, in the parish of St. Amand under the direction of the parish priest, Fr. Antoine de La Haye, put Roland in contact with the Masters and Mistresses of the Christian and Charitable Schools of the Holy Child Jesus for whom Nyel was the main animator for the men teachers, as Father Barré was for the women. The *Remonstrances* of Démia dealing with the necessity of schools for the poor, widely diffused in the 1668 edition, influenced him so strongly that he arranged with Fr. de La Haye, Fr. Barré, and the administrators of the *Poor Committee* at the Rouen

Hospital for two Mistresses of the Holy Child Jesus to go to Rheims to set up a similar work there. These arrived on the 27th December, 1670. Well-informed as he was of these different pedagogical currents, Canon Roland had both theoretical and practical advice with which to nourish his community of the Holy Child Jesus at Rheims.

La Salle was now resident at Rheims since his father's death (1678). As he set about completing his theological studies begun at the Sorbonne, he chose Canon Roland as his spiritual director. La Salle noted Roland's apostolic zeal for schools to educate the daughters of the very poor. Later, as executor of Roland's will, he would have at his disposal the notes and personal papers of the deceased (1678). Thus, he discovered copies and extracts of school regulations destined for use in conferences given to the Mistresses as well as Rules or Constitutions prepared with a view to obtaining episcopal approbation. It was from this material that he, in his turn, took up, rejected, changed, or added to when he set out the pedagogy of the Brothers of the Christian Schools The aim of this present chapter is not so wide-ranging; it is limited to pointing out what derives from those institutions well known by Roland, namely, the Daughters of St. Geneviève, the Christian Union of Charonne, the Sisters of the Cross, and the Parish schools of Saint-Nicholas-du Chardonnet.

1. The Daughters of Saint-Geneviève

In 1670, the Daughters of Saint-Geneviève, established by Mademoiselle du Blosset in the Paris parish of Saint-Nicholas-du-Chardonnet in union with the Daughters of the Holy Family under the responsibility of Madame de Miramion were fifteen in number.[3] Féret, Grand Vicar of Paris and parish priest of St. Nicholas was their Superior. He finalized their Constitutions originally drawn up by Bourdoise, founder of the Community of the Priests of Saint-Nicolas. The approbation for these Constitutions by the Cardinal of Vendôme, the Papal Legate, bears the date 1668. In 1674, a single school, with three classes, cared for three hundred young girls. That suggested classes of a hundred each. As an annex to these classes there was a sort of training college for country school mistresses. The formation given by the Sisters lasted only a few months and was carried out in stages. Another apostolate, which completed this overall activity, was a catechetical seminar organized for ladies who wanted to learn more about those Christian truths they needed to know to be able to baptize children who, at the time of birth, were in danger of death, to be able to go to confession and to receive Holy Communion worthily, to pray and have their families pray.

The Sisters, in their own house which no longer exists, directed retreats of several days for women. As from 1678 a center for the teaching of domestic skills and dressmaking completed this overall work of the Sisters. La Salle was not to follow this multi-form apostolate, but would concentrate his efforts on the school and the training of teachers.[4]

While the primary aim of the Daughters of Saint Geneviève was in some way distinct from its secondary purpose, the aim of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools was unified. Thus we read:

> *"The **first** of the special aims of this Institute of the Daughters of Saint Geneviève is that the persons who are part of this community, work carefully **for their own sanctification** by imitiating the humble charitable and laborious life of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Their **secondary** purpose is **to conduct schools** - teaching young girls reading, writing and especially catechism and to busy themselves with some work suited to their state of life. Their **third** aim is to go ..... to country parishes ... to set up school, to train teachers..... The **fourth** aim, is to welcome school mistresses ..... who wish to make the **spiritual exercises.**"*[5]

On the other hand we read:

> *"The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools is a society in which **profession is made of keeping schools gratuitously**... The end of this Institute is to give a Christian education to children and for this purpose the Brothers keep schools" (Common Rules). "Make **no distinction** between the particular duties of your state and those which refer to **your salvation** and your perfection. Be convinced that you will never effect your salvation more assuredly..... than by fulfilling well the duties of your state provided you do so with the view of doing the will of God (Collection)."*[6]

The *Daughters of Saint Geneviève* "do not renounce, if they so desire, their temporal possessions when they enter the Community" and they "wear no distinctive dress, but they dress like the most modest women in the society around them."[7] La Salle, on the other hand would draw up an important "Memoir on the Habit" of the Brothers to point out its usefulness. The habit inspires respect among students; it unifies the teaching community; it bears witness to a will to live in a religious manner and helps to give teachers a sense of stability in their state which is at the same time lay (i.e. non clerical) and professionally dedicated to a Christian ministry.[8] As for temporal possessions, the Brothers, on entering community, renounce them since "they will have nothing of their own" and "everything will be in common in each house."[9] The chapter on the "Poverty" of the Brothers, and the "Meditations" composed by Saint John-Baptist de La Salle are insistent that the teachers should receive nothing from the pupils or their parents, for otherwise, their school would not be gratuitous. Likewise, the teachers' poverty is useful in that it gives to socially poor people the example of a life of evangelical detachment from earthly goods. To

extol poverty is not possible unless one is oneself poor. "To teach the poor" has its demands. It ties in very well with the present-day notion of inculturation.

2. The Secular Sisters of Charonne (A Christian Union)

Ever since 1661 and after the death of its foundress, Madame Pollalion[10], the Christian Union had been spreading after its origins in a house of the village of Charonne owned by one of the "Daughters" of the group, Anne de Croze. Organized as a training school for maidens and widows, this union was intended to form women for the religious education of recently-converted women and girls. In 1672 Anne de Croze turned over the house as a gift to the Christian Union. The following year, the rules drawn up by Father Le Vachet were approved by the Archbishop of Paris. Their purpose was to "bring up young girls in virtue and piety," to "teach them to read and write" as well as to carry out "the practice of honest work." The Sisters did not make solemn vows and were not cloistered, but they bound themselves by simple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience which did not take away their status as lay people. To these vows they added a vow of union in order to better strengthen the community aspect of their lives.[11]

In contrast to what characterized the Lasallian enterprise, the Christian Union did not give priority to a spirituality based on school activities. At the outset the "Divine Saviour" was to serve as the model. "Since He wanted the little ones to come unto Him, and He instructed them in kindly fashion, we shall do the same with regard to poor girls, orphans and others. We teach them free of charge reading, Christian doctrine, good morals and domestic work." The finality was religious.

"The *Christian Union* is a **pious** society of young ladies and widows who **make a vow** of living together in order **to work for the salvation of one's neighbor** in every way possible."[12]

This was the opposite of the Lasallian emphasis on schooling. Because the priestly ministry dreaded certain scandals which had occurred whenever there were gatherings of young and older women, and of the gossip consequent upon visits by priests to the homes of single women or to women who had to live all crowded together as a result of their great poverty, the pastoral care of women had tended to be organized by women themselves whether in schools, wherein co-education was forbidden, or in the care of the sick and the poor.

The "Christian Union" was transferred to the Hôtel Saint Chaumond in Paris, in 1684.[13]

3. The Sisters of the Cross

It is not a question here of the Dominican sisters of the Cross in Charonne Street, but rather of the Daughters of the Cross founded by Madame de Villeneuve

with the encouragement of St. Francis de Sales and of Jean-Jacques Olier. When their original Constitutions were drawn up, their Superior was George Froger, parish priest of St. Nicholas du Chardonnet.[14] From March 1644, their main house was in Paris, at the Hôtel des Tournelles[15] in the rue du Saint Antoine. Strictly speaking, it was a training center for school mistresses intending to work in various places in towns and villages, and at the same time a novitiate for those women who wanted to be members of the congregation. On several occasions, La Salle was to open a training College for country schoolmasters to be conducted by the Brothers, but he would always regard it as distinct from his novitiate. The country schoolmasters would, in reality, have a training and a set of objectives different from those of the Brothers who were intended to teach "only in the towns." In country areas the teachers could be clerics or envisage becoming such. They were intended to fulfil simultaneously the duties of schoolmaster, sacristan and parish secretary under the close supervision of the parish priest. In the towns, the Brothers promised to remain in their congregation, to be subject to the will of their religious superior, fully entitled to move them from one school to another. The fact that the social position of country pupils was different from that of city pupils likewise entailed adaptations to pedagogical practice. La Salle took this into account when he finally completed his "Conduct of Christian Schools" intending that it be used to meet the needs of town schools. Country school masters might well draw from it principles adaptable to their situation, but need not be expected to use it as rigidly as if it had been written expressly for them.

Even more so than the Sisters of the Cross, the Lasallian Brothers professed to conduct schools. When Féret put the finishing touches to the Constitutions of the Sisters of the Cross with the addition of a few rules, he defined in religious terms the purpose of the congregation. He wrote in 1654:

> *"The postulant... will be made to realize that to be a Daughter of the Cross, it is necessary to be humble, obedient and courageous, and to have a great zeal for the salvation of souls which is the principal aim of this Institute."*[16]
>
> He does not tie this aim essentially to the requirements of schooling, but leaves the apostolate open to other forms of action: *"The sisters who are engaged in the training and education of the young shall reflect in what manner the Blessed Virgin gave her care and service to the Holy child Jesus."*
>
> *The* "principal" *end is to take particular care to be attentive to God's presence... The secondary end is to attract to God one's neighbor... of the same sex such as girls, women and widows. This can be done by ... good example, and the instruction of young girls who are able to benefit considerably therefrom... granted that their minds are like a clean page on which can be written what is desired. In this way, even older girls and still more grown women and widows can be drawn to receiving instruction in their duties as Christians."*

The instruction of older girls and women is regarded as a catechesis which justifies visits to homes on Sundays and feasts.

La Salle would prefer to say that the school "requires a man's total commitment."[17]

4. The parish school of Jacques de Batencour

Since, in establishing the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* at a time when mixed schools were not permitted, La Salle aimed at improving the state of schooling for boys and not for girls; his overall pedagogical plan could not just reproduce what had succeeded with girls. However, he, as well as many others, could take inspiration from a book written as the fruit of eighteen years' experience in schools for boys as well as girls.[18] These schools were the parish schools conducted by the priests of Saint Nicholas de Chardonnet, founded by Adrien Bourdoise.

Batencour regards the school as the essential pastoral means for "raising children" in the "spirit of Christianity" by teaching them "Christian maxims." Of the three parts of his treatise, the first two are directed towards "the qualities of a good teacher" and towards the teaching of "piety in theory... and in practice." Only in the third part is there an introduction to "what needs to be known" to teach children reading, writing, arithmetic and "the first elements of Latin and Greek."[19] While he accepted on his own terms the motives which made the Christian school an essential means of ministry, La Salle did not relegate secular knowledge outside of what constituted a Christian but integrated it because he considered it essential. The teacher's "spirit of faith" was the necessary link in this cooperation with God's creative activity. La Salle wrote: "You are co-workers with God in his work."[20]

La Salle was much more restrained in his way of speaking of the supernatural effects of the teachers' negligence. Just as he asked teachers never to tell the children that such and such an act is a "mortal sin" or that such another is a "venial sin" but merely to say the matter is serious, or that such a thing is wicked, he avoided indicating any other cause for damnation than "mortal sin." He even insisted on saying that venial sin did not lead to damnation. True, he did attempt in a pedagogical fashion to make the children realize that bad actions set them on the slippery slope to serious sins and thus to the danger of damnation but he in no way argued as did Jacques de Batencour that the teacher who took up his employment solely through "human respect" would do nothing "but bring on his own damnation along with that of those he teaches."[21]

Since La Salle organized his schools in order to be able to give preferential treatment to the poor, for whom bread was the staple diet, he did not require his teachers to interfere with what parents would be telling their children ("eat your bread"). Yet, Batencour advised against this universal custom when he wrote: "Paris children eat large quantities of bread" and this "stultifies their minds and makes them dull-witted often as early as the age of nine or ten... All surfeiting is bad, but especially that with bread."

When breakfast was taken in school, La Salle merely advised his teachers to urge the children who had an oversupply of bread to share it by placing the left-overs in a basket so that the teachers could re-distribute them.[22] Similarly, La Salle never allowed a teacher to punish children by depriving them of their meal as *The Parish School* suggested: " You must make them fast sometimes as a punishment for one fault or another by depriving them of their lunch and restoring it to them after school."[23]

When we come to the chapter on correction, we find that La Salle did not retain the form of punishment which required an entire class to mock the boy to be punished. Today, we could hardly justify this; yet, Batencour allowed it saying: "Have a picture of a donkey tied around their necks and other symbols of stupidity, and allow the other students to laugh at them."[24]

Batencour's parish school was not gratuitous in the way John-Baptist de La Salle would envisage it although it was forbidden "to seek anything from the scholars apart from the small contribution which is customarily given depending on the persons, places and subjects taught."[25] It would even seem that the real poor were in the minority because the "little basket" used to take up the scraps left over from the meal was used not for the benefit of the school children but for "alms... for the poor."[26] The fact that Latin and Greek appeared in the syllabus suggested that the school was not specifically established for the children of the poor. Indeed, a real discrimination between rich and poor existed in Batencour's school. The two statements that supported this fact follows:

> *"The poor will be taught gratuitously and we should accept whatever is given by those who are in a position to give something... The number of children can be fixed... at sixty in the school for the poor" (when this class is separate from the other).* [27]

La Salle insisted that the Brothers' community should provide ink free of charge to all pupils, rich and poor alike[28] while *The Parish School* asked the teachers to provide ink, thanks to each child's monthly contribution[29] of a coin valued at a little more than a penny (piece de trois blancs)[30] paid by each child every month.[31]

While Batencour willingly allowed classes of more than one hundred pupils controlled by the principal teacher and an assistant, La Salle did away with the system that Adrien Nyel and his fourteen-year old companion left him as a legacy, and divided the school into several classes with each class having its own teacher responsible for its good order and for the total education of a smaller number of children. In this way a unity of direction and of influence, and a simplification and deepening of personal relationships held sway.[32] What was given more consideration, in view of its influence on pupils, was the teacher's good example. This was done not so much with a view to neutralize the example given simultaneously by different teachers with varying convictions, but to give the teacher the opportunity to fulfill his role more fully by strengthening and personalizing the teacher-pupil relationship in each class.

If we move on from pedagogical aims and principles to the methodology recommended by *The Parish School*, we see that the similarities with the *Conduct of Schools* of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle are numerous. Yet for all this, the unique Lasallian approach, based more on personal observation than on reading seems to be decisive as soon as we engage in detailed comparison.[33]

La Salle's close relationship with Canon Roland and Fr Barré caused him to share in a current of pedagogy originating, for quite some time, in Rouen.

NOTES

1. This *Mémoire* is quoted by Blain, Vol. I, p.169.
2. *Positio Roland* (Beatification Process) p.11, 19.
3. Y.POUTET, *op. cit.*, vol. 1 p.361.
4. Y. POUTET, *op. cit.*, Vol 1, p. 362.
5. *Positio Roland*, p. 161.
6. CL 25, p. 16, and CL 15, p. 95.
7. Y. POUTET, *op. cit.*, Vol I, p. 564, note 22.
8. *Mémoire sur l'habit*, published according to the autograph that has been preserved, in CL 5, pp. 256-262.
9. *Common Rules* of 1705, in CL 25, p. 70. Other Lasallian characteristics are pointed out in Y. POUTET, *op. cit.*, pp. 565-567.
10. J. HILLAIRET, *op. cit.*, Vol II. p.29, vol III, p.365. While Grandet, a contemporary of St. J.B. de La Salle writes POLLALION, Hélyot and Herment, historians not much later write POLAILLON.
11. Y. POUTET, *op. cit.*, Vol 1, p.576. One can bear in mind here the "secular Institutes" of which canon law of 1983 makes mention.
12. *Positio Roland*, p. 168.
13. At the site of No. 226 of rue Saint-Denis, the purchase having been made the previous year. cf. J. HILLAIRET, Vol I, p.294 and vol III, p. 365.
14. *Positio Roland*, p. 164.
15. A. DE SALINIS,S.J., *Madame de Villeneuve... fondatrice et institutrice de la Société de la Croix, (1597-1650)* Paris, 1918, p.437. The building was on the site of buildings existing today at numbers 16-18 of rue St. Antoine, cf. J. HILLAIRET, Vil I, 1952 ed, p. 85 corrected in vol III.
16. *Positio Roland*, p. 163.
17. *Mémoire sur l'habit*, CL 11, p. 350 § 10.
18. The author is identified in Y. POUTET, *L'auteur de* L'Escole paroissiale *et quelques autres usages de son temps*, Cl 48, pp.3-19.
19. *L'École paroissiale*, pp.2-3 of the Preface.
20. CL 13, p. 65.
21. *L'École paroissiale*, p.9. cf. *Vocabulaire lasallien*, Paris, F.E.C. t.11 articles "damner," "damnation."

22. *École paroissiale*, pp. 22 and 42. *Conduite des écoles*, in CL 24, pp.7, 8.
23. *Op. cit.*, p. 23.
24. *Ibid.* p.42.
25. *Ibid.* p.50.
26. *Ibid,* p. 67
27. *Ibid.* pp.71-72.
28. *Règles communes*, CL 25.
29. *École paroissiale*, p.84.
30. About fifteen deniers or a little more than a scu. (A blanc was a small silver coin worth about half a sou. *Translator's note.*)
31. *École paroissiale*, p. 84.
32. *Ibid., p. 324.*
33. Several significant comparisons are emphasised by Jean PUNGIER in *Comment est née la Conduite des écoles*, Rome, F.E.C., 1980.

Chapter Five

THE PEDAGOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF FATHER BARRÉ, ADRIAN NYEL, FRANÇOISE DUVAL AND ANNE LECŒUR

La Salle was aware of the pedagogical principles used by the Jesuits, who formed Nicholas Roland, as well as those of Saint Peter Fourrier, whose Congregation of Our Lady received several members of La Salle's family in their convent in Rheims. But it was from Rouen that the idea came for starting schools for poor children which were suited to their needs. Father Barré, who belonged to the Order of Minims founded by Saint Francis of Paula, was the prime mover of the separate groups of male and female teachers whom the Poor Committee and the administration of the General Hospital entrusted with the education of needy children. Adrian Nyel looked after the boys, while Anne Lecœur and Françoise Duval, given the girls to care for, started what was in reality a religious community. In 1677 both groups were given a set of *Statutes* which were not printed until 1685 after a period of trial. The title is given here in full, because it clearly delineates the distinctive character of these teachers:

> *"Statutes and Rules of the Charitable and Christian Schools of the Holy Child Jesus, established in cities, market towns and villages, to be observed under the good pleasure of our Lords the Archbishops and Bishops, and of the Parish Priests, by the men and women teaching in the parishes where they will be employed, under the guidance of Rev. Father Barré, Minim," Paris, Le Cointe, 1685.*

We should note that Fr Barré was really a preacher, confessor and spiritual director, being trained as a Professor of Theology and a Librarian. He had never taught boys or girls younger than twelve years old. So his input was specifically spiritual and religious on the one hand, and on the other, he reflected on and coordinated the pedagogical experience of the teachers whom he was directing. When he published pedagogical texts, he put into writing what Adrian Nyel, Françoise Duval, Anne Lecœur and their teachers lived each day in school. So it is not surprising that the pedagogical principles discovered by Nyel, Anne Lecœur and Françoise Duval are all attributed to Fr Barré, while their names are scarcely ever seen since they left no pedagogical writings of their own.

The special importance of this chapter devoted to the writings of Fr Barré is understandable, as the experience of all these teachers was known only to themselves, and up to the edition of 1685, constitutes the real origin of the pedagogical system brought from Rouen to Rheims under the initiative of Nicholas Roland.

In Rheims before 1670, male and female orphans less than eight years old were brought up as well as could be expected by untrained people, recruited with difficulty by George Varlet's wife. Canon Roland found this situation unsatisfactory, so he tried to correct it: he could not allow to continue what Maillefer and Oudard Coquault described in this way:

> *This "orphanage takes children from this scum of beggars who devour everything. It looks after them and supports them and makes them a charge on the taxpayer... I know they mean well, but this kind of people are fostered by charity and become dependent on it."*
>
> (Oudard Coquault)
>
> *"Many fatherless children were neither taught nor encouraged by anyone."*
>
> (Maillefer)[1]

A study of the **sources** of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle's writings would require systematic research into the resemblances and differences of his texts with those of Father Barré. But it is just the **origin**, that is, all the things our Saint was aware of when he began his work in schools, which we are looking at now. What will shed most light on the origin of his pedagogical ideas, therefore, is what Nyel and the women Canon Roland recruited from Fr Barré did. That is why we need to look at everything known about them about them from the time La Salle first became interested in the instruction of the poor. Although this knowledge is the outcome of observing how things were done, it is known to us through the writings of Fr Barré putting down on paper what his teachers did.

1. Teaching principles and practices brought from Rouen

Canon Roland, Madame Varlet's adviser, found a remedy for the disastrous situation of the young orphans of Rheims, when on 27th December 1670 Françoise Duval and Anne Lecœur, teachers of the Charitable and Christian Schools of the Holy Child Jesus, arrived from Rouen. Soon, a day school was added to the Orphanage. By 1675, there were already a thousand poor girls attending four gratuitous schools in Rheims. Four years later (1679) La Salle took over when Canon Roland died. He was able to bring to a successful conclusion the arrangements with the city, General Hospital and welfare authorities, and *Letters Patent* were issued for the *Sisters of the Child Jesus of Rheims.*

Discipline was strict. Orphans younger than three stayed under the care of the General Hospital. Boys and girls from three to eight years old were confided to the Sisters after the city Deputy decided which ones were to fill the places available.

During their eighth year, they were sent by the town authorities[2] to the General Hospital or some other appropriate institution. So, in accordance with what their community considered important, the *Sisters of the Child Jesus* were really free to run gratuitous schools for the daughters of poor parents. They taught them "Reading, writing, the catechism, and Christian sentiments."[3]

Chapter 3 of their *Constitutions* treats fully of *The School.* Each of their four schools in Rheims was divided into several classes. The lowest class could not have more than 60 students, while the others could only have 50. School in the morning began at 8:00 am., and finished at 10:30. At the most convenient time in the morning, the girls went to Mass.[4] We can get some idea of how long they remained at school from the fact that they tried to prepare their pupils for First Communion, and this normally took place when they were twelve.[5]

The afternoon timetable was more complex. The "big girls"—who were young adults—only had the teachers for an hour (1 to 2 pm). The younger girls (ordinary schoolgirls) then had lessons for two and a half hours (2 pm to 4:30).[6] On Thursday there was a holiday. On Sundays and feasts the schoolchildren had Catechism for an hour, then there was an hour's instruction "for the women and the older girls."[7] This is from the 1683 *Constitutions.*

Françoise Duval and Anne Lecœur knew well that Roland had employed them because of the *Admonitions* Charles Démia published in 1668 commending Christian schools. Démia's work was centered around Lyons.[8] They knew how Adrian Nyel had run his schools in Rouen since 1658. They were still influenced by Fr Barré who was the spiritual director of their communities in Rouen, and who continued in Paris his care for schools by re-editing his 1677 manuscript called "*Statutes and Regulations for the Teachers of the Charitable and Christian Schools of the Child Jesus.*"[9] They were just as familiar with the practices of the Ursulines and of the Sisters of Saint Peter Fourrier, who had schools in Rheims.[10]

The *Rules* of 1677 tell us:

- The teachers' Christian life and permanent spiritual formation were strengthened by reading books like *The Imitation of Christ,* Grenada's *Pathway for Sinners, The Lives of the Saints,* Rodriguez's works, the *Interior Christian,* Abelly's *The Crown of the Christian Year,* Saint Francis de Sale's *Introduction to the Devout Life,* Turlot's *Catechism,* Caesar de Bus's *Christian Doctrine,* and "some good apologetics writers" who could defend Catholic faith against Protestant teachings.
- Students had half an hour to "assemble" before lessons. This time was used for study.
- They saluted the Crucifix, then politely acknowledged their classmates.
- Pupils appointed as prefects gave out textbooks, pens, and paper or exercise books during this time. They gathered them all up again when lessons were finished.

- When it was time for classes to begin, teachers and students knelt "to offer what they did to God, saying, 'My God, we offer you all that we are going to do; do what is needed for your glory, and please give us your blessing.'"
- Each class was divided into two or three sections: Advanced, Middle, and the "Young ones who are still learning the alphabet."
- Morning class consisted in learning to read Latin. The teacher made the 'Advanced' ones read, making sure the 'Middle' ones were following. If there was a second teacher, she had the 'Middle ones' do writing. When there was no third teacher to look after the Young ones, a prefect, that is, an Advanced student, introduced them to reading letters and syllables. When the 'Advanced' group finished reading, the teacher had the 'Middle ones' read, while the second teacher took the 'Advanced' for writing. Later, the 'Head Teacher' took the Young ones.
- Having a number of teachers in the same room was not the ideal way to go; still less using an 'Advanced' student to replace a third teacher if there was none in the school. Having to keep costs to a minimum for the schools to remain gratuitous meant that there could not be as many teachers as might be desirable.
- 'Advanced' and 'Middle' groups used the same textbook. The method was, for the teacher to spell out "five or six lines," then to read "a page very clearly, pausing at full stops, commas and places to be emphasized, while all the pupils followed in their books word for word, reading softly." The teacher would then point to a student and invite her to continue reading out loud. Each girl would read a verse in turn (if it was a Psalm, for example), but from time to time the teacher would call out of turn on one who did not seem to be following. At other times, she would get the students to read "a syllable or a word at a time," taking care that every letter was pronounced properly.
- As each lesson began, one pupil was appointed to interrupt the reading when a mistake was made. Then the teacher would ask the reader to say what her mistake was, to spell the word and re-read it correctly. The prefects who replaced the third teacher were trained to use this method.
- If there were too many girls in the same group, the teacher would divide them into two so that there would be no more than 18 or 20 to read, as each one had to have a turn at reading every day.
- There was a different method for the beginners. Big letters were handwritten on large sheets of cardboard. The teacher would display them on the wall, then, using a tapered rod, point out the differences in three or four letters. For example, an <*m*> has three legs while an <*n*> has only two; or a <*u*> is made like an <*n*> upside down, open at the top, not at the bottom. After the individual letters came syllables. All would say them together, then each would say them separately. Then the teacher would show in what way vowels were different from consonants. If there were backward students who still

did not know their letters, she would appoint one of the big girls to help individuals to sort out the letters quietly, so as not to disrupt the class.

- Writing practice was also used to teach spelling. The 'Advanced' students copied six lines of a model the teacher gave them, then five or six lines of Capital letters and "as many of numbers." Six more lines "copied from their catechism" helped teach them to spell. Leaving the 'Advanced' to do their writing then to read, the teacher would show the 'Middle' group how to go about writing and would hold the hand of each in order to guide the movement. She would correct the mistakes in their work and give advice to help them avoid these mistakes next time. She would show the most advanced how to "sharpen their pens."
- If there was only one teacher, she started by asking all the 'Advanced' and 'Middle' girls to fill in their time writing while she looked after the Young ones,' then she made each girl read before going along behind the writers to fix their mistakes.
- So the method was both simultaneous and individual, and even mutual, using prefects. La Salle was to bear this in mind.
- At nine o'clock the lessons were interrupted for morning prayer. This was recited very slowly by one of the senior girls while the others said the same words softly, deliberately enough to engrave them in their memories.
- Another student would say Grace before meals, the whole class joining in softly. This was followed by quarter of an hour for breakfast in silence. A prefect with a list of the students' names would call the roll at this time to check on and record those present.
- No pupil was allowed to be absent from the meal, still less to exchange hers with someone else. The thirsty would signal for a drink. The teacher would encourage them to be satisfied with bread, especially in Lent and on Fridays, "in a spirit of mortification" and because it is "a very healthy thing," especially for children.
- After the meal break, the upper sections continued the writing they had been doing until they finished the task set, then spent their time with their sewing or knitting. After their reading the 'Young ones' did the same as far as they could.
- School finished at half past ten. Then prayers were said: *The Antiphon of Our Lady, Saint Joseph, Saint Nicholas* (Patron of students), *Saint Catherine, Saint Geneviève, Saint Denis, All Saints*. This was followed by the *Angelus,* then all proceeded in silence to the church for Mass. They were dismissed from the classroom row by row. If there were several teachers, one walked at the front. At the church door, her job was to watch that all behaved respectfully, that they took their places row by row with enough space between each "to prevent chatting."
- On coming out from church, two supervisors appointed before leaving school watched to see that silence and good order reigned. When they had to exercise

their authority it was always in a low voice or by hand signals, and always "nicely and politely." The pupils went home "modestly and without playing around." If there was no Mass at the church, they went all the same to adore the Blessed Sacrament.

- Lessons recommenced at half past one in summer, and at one o'clock in winter. Things went on as in the morning, except that the reading was in French instead of Latin. The teacher would explain compulsory liaisons, and showed how consonants could not be sounded without vowels. She took care that the students did not acquire a disagreeable accent which would be hard to correct later. Once they could read properly, it was good to practice "softening the harsh sounds."
- Writing was done as in the morning, but instead of capital letters and numbers there was counting, arithmetic and spelling in which the differences between masculine and feminine, and singular and plural were explained. Counting was called 'jet' (short for *jeton*, a flat, round piece of plastic shaped like a coin), because they used counters arranged in lines and piles. 'Jet', spelling and arithmetic "could be taught on different days."

  No method was given to teach calculations by 'jet.' Each teacher used her own way of doing it.

- Those who could not write worked at their other tasks (sewing and knitting) after they had read one at a time.
- A snack was taken in the schoolroom at four o' clock. Before it, there was a quarter of an hour for studying the diocesan catechism. As not all could read fluently, the teacher read and had them repeat it to impress the various sounds in their minds.
- During the silent snack, the presence of students was once again checked as in the morning. Evening prayer followed, the students going home at half past four in summer "and a little earlier in winter" evidently because darkness set in quickly. As on leaving for Mass, the dismissal was done in an orderly manner. They were not followed outside the school gates.
- The catechism was not taught every day, but only on Tuesday and Friday afternoons. On these days the girls started with their needlework until three o'clock, reciting to each other in pairs the catechism lesson that had been set for them. The prefects watched to see that this was done properly. If all did not have "the same ability," the teacher divided them into two groups just before three o'clock, then taught catechism for an hour on the topic "which would be examined at church the following Sunday." If there were two teachers, they taught the catechism one after the other for three quarters of an hour each, starting at half past two. In that way, the pupils got their snack at four o'clock as on the other days.
- On Saturdays, and on the day before the important feast days, the teacher gave her lesson on "the virtues and the spirit of the mysteries which the

church was celebrating." We don't know how long it lasted, but it was called 'short,' which might mean a somewhat extended reflection at the beginning of evening prayer.

- On Sundays and feast days, the children assembled at school at a convenient time to line up properly before going to the parish Mass. Unlike the weekday usage, the school children took their places "in such a way that they took up as little space as possible." They came back to school in the afternoon to get ready for Vespers, followed by the priest's catechism lesson during which he examined them on what they had learned during the week. If the girls' mothers wanted to go to church with them, the teacher would let them. The *Rule* of 1677 did not mention fathers.
- On days when there was a procession (quarter-tense, patronal feasts) the teacher would take the pupils if the route was not too long.
- On the day before the feasts of Easter, Pentecost, Ascension, the Assumption, and other solemn feasts such as those of Our Lady or of the patron of the parish, the dedication of the church, All Saints' Day, Christmas and Epiphany, the students went to First Vespers. During Holy Week they went for half the office of Tenebrae.
- Each year the feast of the Presentation of Mary in the temple (21st November) was kept as the school's own feast day. Mass was said for the intention of the school children. During the Offertory they came up "to present their hearts to Our Lord though the mediation of his glorious mother, the holy virgin." In the afternoon, hymns and canticles were sung for their enjoyment. At three o'clock they said the Vespers of the little office of Our Lady in two choirs. A short conference followed the Litany of our Lady, and the school feast ended with the Salve Regina.

2. School Officers in 1677

To train the girls in virtue as well as in housekeeping, the teachers associated with Françoise Duval gave them "little jobs around the school" which rotated each month; or every two months if this was more convenient. These office bearers were called 'officials.'

- These were "prefects" or "supervisors." One or two were appointed to tidy up the books, to clean up after snacks and lunch, to put away the pots and cups. One or two others arranged the desks needed for writing. Another looked after the pens, another the yard duties; two others supervised the lines for leaving school. Two looked after drinks, two opened and shut the doors, one looked after the shrine at the back of the classroom, two kept the attendance register for morning and afternoon, two others saw to good order and neatness inside the classroom. Two to four watched that free study time was well used by everybody.

- The number of office bearers was reduced if there were not so many pupils. One prefect could then do several tasks.
- One official was selected by the teacher as a secret partner. She had to keep an eye on the prefects not to appraise them, but so that she could tell the teacher what had happened while she was away, and the teacher could then compare her account with that of the prefects or other pupils to get a better idea of what had really happened.
- Every month there was a prefects' meeting so that the teacher could encourage them and explain their duties to them.
- The main faults to watch for were listed: quarreling, improper words and actions, insults, forwardness in church, lies, thefts and disobediences.

3. Rewards and punishments

- Among the punishments recommended to avoid the repetition of faults committed, the *Rule* of 1677 suggested gagging the mouths of chatterboxes, and putting a dunce's cap on the head of a lazy one. The whip was used only for a big lie, serious misconduct in church, and prolonged, unnecessary absences from school.
- It was up to the teacher to watch out for problems before the offense was committed. For lesser faults, she could tell them to "kiss the floor, ask forgiveness of her classmates out aloud, stand up on her seat, or go behind the door to the bench for the recalcitrants." On rare occasions a strap could be used on the hands.
- "The teacher must be careful above all never to punish because of her bad mood, temper, or when she is beside herself with rage. It would be better not to punish at all than to act in this way, because when you are in a temper, you act neither reasonably nor discreetly. It can happen that, in your rage, you hit the children on the head or the face at the wrong time, or you whip them so savagely that it is offensive to God. So, when you feel moved to anger, lift your heart up to God and put off the punishment until another time" in order to correct always "charitably, and with a calm mind."
- For refinement's sake, a curtain was stretched across the corner of the classroom where whipping took place. If there was no curtain available, the girls not being whipped were invited to bow their heads onto their knees while the deed was being done. Furetière explicitly noted that a birch rod was best for spanking children. The pupil being punished was exhorted to ask God's pardon, and that of her classmates to make up for her behavior. If there were "malice and obstinacy, and not just frailty," children who remained incorrigible in spite of reprimands and punishments "will be sent home after a warning to their parents."
- Rewards were no less necessary: leaflets with spiritual songs, pious books, Agnus Dei, pictures and medals. "The best reward for those who have

made their First Communion will be to allow them to go to Communion if their confessor agrees, which would only happen rarely, and when you see in them a desire to do so and become better."

4. Education in piety and advice for teaching catechism

The Scholastic Hours may be considered a real **education in piety**. A whole chapter describes the prayers which were said in school. These times of recollection were an important aspect of the pedagogy as it was practiced. All actions were done, not for selfish or even merely natural reasons, but **for love of God**. Times for private reflection, examination of conscience, of intentions, and of their ideals in life, gave meaning to their life, their study, and their social behavior. These practices helped lead the students to greater effort and to self-control: their thoughts, feelings and instinctive reactions.

The art of catechizing is a top priority concern.

Beside the manuscript of the *Statutes and Rules* of 1677, the Archives of the *Sisters of the Child Jesus of Providence in Rouen* has another older manuscript which is addressed to teachers who were not yet organized into a community but who, it was hoped, would renounce marriage (page 20 of the 24-page manuscript). It is called *How to Teach Catechism Effectively*, and was held in high regard by Françoise Duval and Anne Lecœur, as well as by Adrian Nyel. What did they say?

- The teacher must first of all abandon herself into the hands of God so that he will speak through her mouth, and she will say nothing "from a human viewpoint." She asks the Holy Spirit to speak "to the hearts" of her children so that her catechism lesson may be fruitful.
- Catechism lessons were usually designed to prepare for the Sunday recitations. The teacher did not talk much, but asked many questions. She avoided difficult terminology, and spoke with a soft and natural voice. Each question and answer were repeated several times, to inculcate them in their memories.
- No new matter was learned until it was well explained. Each idea was only memorized when it had been clearly understood. The teacher did not decide which sins were mortal and which were venial, because their gravity depended on the particular circumstances. It was enough to say: "that's bad; it is not pleasing to God, it must be avoided more than death." When a pupil asked if something was a mortal sin or not, the teacher replied that "a good Christian loves God with all her heart" and avoids everything that is bad, without being satisfied to turn away from what is 'mortal.'
- In the syllabus we see: *Sign of the Cross, the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed* in French and Latin, *I confess,* the sacraments, *the Commandments of God* and those *of the Church.*

- Explanations are geared to what the pupils can understand. The first aim is to make them understand that the Our Father is an act of hope, the *I confess* an act of humility and repentance. They work through the Diocesan Catechism in order. About a fortnight before All Saints and Christmas, and towards the middle of Lent and about a fortnight before Pentecost and the Assumption, the teacher takes a quarter of an hour of catechism time to speak about sorrow for sin and the sacrament of penance so that the students might approach their priest either for a blessing if they are young, or for absolution if they have previously made their first confession. Similarly, when they are about to be confirmed, she explains the meaning of this sacrament and of the rites that accompany it. Pupils are prepared for their first Communion. On the day before either Easter or Pentecost when the baptismal fonts are blessed, the pupils renew their Baptismal promises.

As the teachers would not be doing their job if they restricted their teaching to the truths to be believed, their zeal should lead them to get the girls to practice the **virtues recommended in the Gospels:**

"Instruction is given, sometimes on one, and at other times on another of the following truths, choosing those most in line with the theme of the next Sunday's catechism, and preparing examples on the same subject as a conclusion to the lesson. These practical truths are (...) :

- First, to be saved, you must keep the *Commandments of God,* that is, to love Him with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself.
- Second, it is not enough to love God and your neighbor without doing good actions.
- Third, it is not enough to do good actions if you do not do them **purely for God**.
- Fourth, it would be better to die than to commit a mortal sin.
- Fifth, you must avoid occasions of sin, and as much as possible, never commit venial sin.
- Sixth, you cannot serve two masters, God and the world, and our baptism requires us to stand against the wicked world and its maxims and vanities.
- Seventh, we should renounce ourselves and imitate Jesus Christ.
- Eighth, you must do penance in order to be saved.
- Ninth, both the road to heaven and its gates are narrow, and few go in there, because the easy road to Hell is preferred.
- Tenth, you must never give bad example nor lead another into sin.
- Eleventh, you must be humble and good-natured.
- Twelfth, the humble are exalted and the proud humbled, and you must love the last place.
- Thirteenth, you must be submissive and obedient to parents, teachers and superiors.

- Fourteenth, you must show great respect for churches and all holy things, for blessed bread, holy water, relics, priests, religious and others.
- Fifteenth, you must be civil and respectful to everyone.
- Sixteenth, you must never do to others what you would not want them to do to you.
- Seventeenth, in whatever state God puts you, you must accept His holy will, thanking Him as much for poverty, sickness and trouble, as for plenty of everything, health and prosperity.

The teachers give their children an education in Christianity by such truths, which instruct us and inculcate the practice of virtue, and help them **form their judgment**, so that they can judge, appreciate and love, not in accordance with our corrupt nature, but **by faith** and through the sentiments of Jesus Christ whose wisdom is completely opposed to that of the world, so that they will know who the Gospels tell us are blessed, and who are condemned."

After this list of basic truths which should permeate all instruction, **stress is placed on the beatitudes** of the gospel, the counsels of perfection, which the evangelist never meant to refer solely to Religious. The way of transforming them into convictions, that is to say the pedagogical method, is then set out.

With regard to the beatitudes, it is good to "make the following Acts of Faith." For example:

> *"Yes, my God, I believe that you bless the poor in spirit, the good-natured, the peaceful, the merciful, the pure in heart, those who weep, or who hunger and thirst for justice. I believe this, my God, because you have said it."*

Fr Barré called this method of teaching girls "prayer of the heart," prayer of sentiments derived from the certitudes of faith. It is not enough to teach them to pray: they must learn to **pray their faith**.

The explanation of each beatitude should culminate in convincing the students, in "making an impression" on their minds and hearts, which is very **different from brainwashing** which does not respect their liberty. So they do not say "with the world that the poor are unfortunate" as well as "those who suffer persecution for God"; but they see in them (i.e., poverty and persecution) means of salvation through union with the suffering Christ.

Up to now, as you have noticed, there is no mention of hell. John Delumeau's thesis[11] on the weight which 17th century teachers put on it does not take into account the pastorally sound catechetical practice of the *Sisters of the Child Jesus of Rheims*. For them, the beatitudes and **the love of God** were the most important thing. So Fr Barré's followers told their students of "unhappy people cursed by God," following the gospel, where Jesus Christ said in Luke chapter 6: "*How terrible for you who are rich now, ; you have had your easy life! How terrible for you who laugh now;*

you will mourn and weep! How terrible when all people speak well of you. Woe to those who give scandal."

Without mentioning either hell or fear of eternal punishment to move the heart, the reflection on the gospel text which follows uses acts of faith which point out that you can only "avoid these curses of God" by "humility amid riches, detaching your heart from earthly things, loving the poor, giving alms through charity (in the sense of love), making the best use of your wealth... by all kinds of good work... the real treasures of a Christian soul."

To suffer God's curse is to lose his love, and this loss is itself the greatest punishment for anyone created for love.

Teaching should never just consist of words alone. Its purpose is to help make our behavior better. So the teachers must "be sure the pupils never speak in worldly fashion." They reprove them by using "a firm voice which makes a lasting impression on their minds so that they remember."

Each month, they write on a board "the aforesaid maxims and truths." They are left where they can be seen, and the pupils are asked what they mean. Whoever gives the best explanation is rewarded.

One last maxim is taught as being especially important: "Anything which does not help us please God and get to heaven is useless. So it is with honors, glory, fripperies,[12] riches and worldly amusements" for they are "only traps which the devil uses to... lead us to hell [since it] is very hard to use these things in a good way."

The pupils are invited to "always dress modestly, and never uncover their throat, nor their arms, as do worldlings and prostitutes", and to "tell their mothers what they have learned in school on this subject to get their approval" so that their daughters "will always show that modesty that the holy apostles Peter and Paul urged them to keep when at baptism they renounced the works of the devil which are worldly fripperies and excesses."

This training in purity, in moderation of everything which could excite sensuality by their pedagogy of "Christian modesty," was the object of particular attention by the teachers. Aiding in this were "flight from occasions of sin and dangerous conversations, strolling around... and playing with boys, even their brothers or other relatives" because "girls prefer the company of their mothers," and not allowing them to "share a bed with their brothers or parents." They were advised "to always do something suitable to their condition and circumstances, be it housework, needlework, tapestry or something like that... Idleness was the source of all bad habits and evils." Such idleness caused "the fall of most girls and women... The girls were taught to work at school."

They were also urged to say morning and evening prayer at home and to "ask their mother" often if they could say grace before and after meals, to ask God often "for the grace to know their vocation."

When and how was all this explained? Evidently during catechism lessons, but also at other times.

The teachers had first to be convinced themselves of the importance of the various **maxims of Christian life**. Their zeal would enable them to find the best times to teach sometimes one of them, and sometimes another. If she did not feel "clever enough to explain the gospel truths," she could have them repeat "salutary maxims for children" after drawing them from "the book called *The Good Lot of the Poor*, page 28.[13] She could also use the diocesan catechisms or those of Châlons, John Eudes, Bellarmin or Turlot, as well as *Christian Pedagogy, Family Pedagogy, True devotion, Lives of the Saints,* Abelly's *Meditations*, and those of Busée, *How to Avoid Sin*, printed by Bresche, and Grenada's and Rodriguez's *Works*.[14]

5. Some counsels for teachers regarding school practice

Without going into didactic details, it would be good to look at other *Notices* on the efficient running of a school, especially as they show something of the spirit, which is what we are ultimately looking for. They are on pages 18 to 20 of the same manuscript from the Archives of the Sisters in Rouen, whose methods and generous spirit Françoise Duval and Anne Lecœur brought with them to Rheims in 1670. Let us draw from these the essence of their pedagogical value. La Salle, as executor of Nicholas Roland's Will, was to become deeply immersed in them.

It stated specifically that "the teachers take as the main goal of their work, not just teaching children to read and write, but instructing them in what they need to know in order to be saved, and to give them **a Christian education**.

To achieve this, God's grace is needed. This is more easily obtained when the teachers' intention "is pure, and detached from all self-interest" than when human prudence leads them to accept too many pupils, though fear of not having enough income. This comes from the parishes, and the "Council Welfare," which tends to economize by reducing the number of teachers. Pedagogical prudence, on the other hand, inspired to seek the good of the children, would avoid having too many children in each class.

The teachers must "gain a lofty idea of the divine perfections" so as to adore God "in spirit and in truth." They do this by "the holy exercise of meditation" which will dispose them to want to "rely entirely on God's will and action" **to love** with all their heart, to live only for him by working for his glory and seeing to it that nothing displeases him if they can prevent it.

"An increase in faith in all the gospel truths, and a generous confidence is born of this love" with the help of divine grace, for the instruction of the children. The teachers will attribute to God "all the good that comes from it"; they will attribute to themselves the setbacks with confusion "as unworthy servants," but without losing heart, for a firm resolve to "persevere until death" in doing God's will would strengthen their courage.

Every "teacher must always strive for Christian perfection, and make this desire grow each day" so as to give good example to their students. In order to

"regulate her passions," she masters the uncontrolled movements of her heart, "feelings of love for the world," vanity, human respect, attachment to self-interest, impatience and anger. She does not show "a little more affection" to certain pupils, even though they are more lovable than the others, but welcomes "with the same warmth rich and poor." She "teaches them with as much care" since they are equal in the sight of God.

"The spirit of faith" enables her to see Jesus Christ "in these little souls to whom he has given his own life and whom he has washed with his precious blood" in baptism. Their baptismal innocence "is a treasure which Jesus Christ has entrusted to her since children have "neither the enlightenment nor the prudence" needed to appreciate its worth in the face of the dangers to which they are exposed. "The teacher, and all who have been entrusted with their education, are appointed by God to preserve this treasure by their example, their prayers and good instruction." So the teacher "takes the place of the guardian angel and of a good shepherd, praying for the children," and teaching them how to overcome temptations and avoid occasions of sin.

To be successful in "schoolwork" which is Christian and gratuitous, **requires a real vocation**. Each teacher applies herself to acquire a high regard for her work, and to speak of it "only in respectful terms," even making it obvious that after "religious and clerics who work for the good of souls, there is no "other profession except that of **schoolteacher** which gives entrance into "this holy ministry of forming and bringing forth Jesus Christ in souls."

A vocation is not enough. **There must be a learning period** either in a community which engages in running schools for the poor, or with an experienced teacher who is prepared to "take the trouble to teach the most useful method and how to fulfill all that is required by this occupation." It is "certain that one should not undertake it" except after "a serious spiritual retreat." It is hoped that the teachers "will be resolute" in consecrating their whole life to the service of God and of their neighbor, "that they have common sense," good enough health, "a great zeal for Christian education," and that they "can read and write."

In order to give good example, they should go to confession in their parish, and select a spiritual director, whom "they will obey as if he were God himself," naturally "as far as is prudent." So they will avoid familiarity, unnecessary conversations, sentimental attachments "which act as a plague against devotion." This director, if he is "a servant of God, will not take it amiss" to be given this duty.

In her parish, the teacher is "more obliged than other women to be a perfect model of charity," (in the sense of *fraternal love*) towards her neighbors. "Her life must be the gospel in action." Being prudent "in word," she will endure "even abuse for the love of God without seeking vengeance, or returning evil for evil." She will look for "opportunities to help them" who have made her suffer. She will help "materially and spiritually *the poor who are sick* and *others who are afflicted* by prayers, visits, exhortations, instruction and other means of relief, seeing God in the poor." She will not forget that Jesus Christ considers as "done to him what is done for love of him to the least of his brethren."

To reach this ideal, the teachers "must take a rule of life" which includes the opportunity for prayers, and a retreat "every year." They "never go walking around on Sundays and feasts, nor to weddings or other social occasions," but "stay with their children on the days when there is a parish catechism lesson." When they have done this, "they will take the time to visit some pious people or some poor people who are sick to try to console them or to take with them some girls or ladies to read a spiritual book to them, and to speak with them about how to get to heaven."

Other passages which have unquestionable pedagogical interest because they are based on rather deep psychological observations, occur in the same Rouen manuscript (pp 20 - 23):

- Where there are two teachers, the second must always support the headteacher and will see to it that the pupils are never demoralized by signs of opposition between them.
- When students' mothers come to see them, the teacher will advise them to make sure the child never gets bad example at home, that the servants never give any such, and that they don't play with their young neighbors "because otherwise, the trouble taken" at school "would be useless."
- She will also advise them to "put the children to bed early" so that they can "get up early for the sake of their health and holiness, and also to be on time for school.
- If there are poor people who cannot get on without their daughters, the teacher will come to an agreement with them about the amount of time which can be given them (i.e., the daughters) for school. She will note it in the enrollment register.
- Parents will be asked "to consider it fitting that the children work" at little housekeeping jobs at school. They will provide what is needed and also see that they have a pewter cup so that their daughters can "drink out of their own."
- The case of unmarried mothers is not left in the abstract, but is delicately touched on in the advice that if they are married, ask them not to sleep with their daughters, nor to have their sons and daughters in the same bed; and to suggest that their daughter should lead the prayers of the whole family together.
- Ask the mothers to come to the school at least once every three months to talk to the teachers about their daughter's behavior.
- To give them, or ask them to buy, "a book about the duties of parents towards their children" and to follow its advice.
- The *Rules of the Synod* and the Archbishop of Paris's regulations forbade schoolteachers to have co-educational classes... "School mistresses will not enroll a single boy, no matter how young, for any reason whatever." This regulation from Rouen would not be applied literally in Rheims in the first years that Françoise Duval took over Varlet's Orphanage since the town authorities put boys and girls under eight years old there.

- "You can take Huguenot girls"—not recent converts—on condition that they do not bring with them any books different from those of the other girls, and they "obeyed all the school rules." This last condition meant that it applied not only to girls whose parents agreed to their daughters following lessons in the Catholic catechism, and who might therefore be converted as a result of these instructions. The lessons put them all in a position of choice with knowledge of what they were doing. It also implied that certain students would remain Huguenots.
- The **pedagogy underlying the reading lesson** meant using only religious works, besides the "A.B.C. for the very young": the Latin *Psalter*, Cerné's *Christian Family Teacher*, the diocesan *catechism* and that entitled "*The Catechism or Customary Instruction for Avoiding Sin*" published in Lyons by Bresche.
- The school referred to in this *Advice on How to Run Schools* was **not gratuitous for everyone,** as a register containing the list of pupils to be taken had, opposite each name, a cross each month when their fees were paid, as "it is right that the teacher is recompensed for her work and that the pupils pay" what their parents agreed to. The girls "who learn to write will pay more than the others. They will give one *sol* a month for ink, and each year on All Saints' Day for wood" for the stove. If there was any money over, it could be used to decorate the little shrine in the classroom. It was possible not to charge fees when the school was "endowed." All the same some pupils could be accepted without fees "through a spirit of charity and for the love of Jesus Christ." This free schooling was even encouraged as it brought "a blessing on the school." On 21st November, for the feast of the Presentation of Our Lady, which was the school's feast day, the pupils were invited to give "something towards the stipend for that day's Mass." If "there should be too much, have two Masses said."

This discrimination between rich and poor, and the parents' helping to cover Mass stipends, although it was left voluntary for those who would pay, was never taken up by La Salle for whom gratuity would be "essential to his Institute."

Conversely, the document concludes with quotations from Saint Francis de Sales, from the Visitation Sisters, and Saint Benedict, such as: "Peace to all who will keep this Rule for the love of Jesus Christ and the salvation of souls"—"Live Jesus and Mary"— "Blessed be God forever." La Salle was to take inspiration from this. We even have, from the tome of his canonization, the importance of phrases chosen from Scripture, which inspired the zeal of Françoise Duval and Anne Lecœur as well as the teachers Nyel formed in Rouen.

"Whoever perseveres to the end will be saved..."

"Those who will have taught many the ways of justice will shine like so many stars by their halo as Doctors throughout the whole of the blessed eternity."

At the end of this chapter, it should be clear that the texts of Barré do not come from a religious theorist, but they set down in writing the practices of people

who devoted their entire lives to run a gratuitous Christian school successfully, and have come down to us to inspire us to do the same. Originally, it was mostly Adrian Nyel, who was in charge of all the schools for the people in Rouen from 1658, then later the women who taught for Fr Barré with scholastic and religious zeal, and finally took their know-how to Rheims. Another town, Lyons, also contributed at this time or shortly afterwards, to the evolution of a system of pedagogy adapted to the needs of the sons and daughters of the poor. Charles Démia played an essential part in this which quickly spread to other towns and dioceses.

NOTES

1. Y. Poutet, *op. cit.*, Vol 1, pp. 127, 389f.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 390-391.
3. The Sisters' Archives, Rheims, *Constitutions of 1683*, chapter I, Article 2.
4. *Ibid.*, Chapter VII, § 3.
5. *Positio Roland*, p. 43.
6. The Sisters' Rheims Archives, *Constitutions*, Chapter VIII, § 5.
7. *Ibid.*, § 9.
8. Y. Poutet, *Charles Démia, Journal de 1686-1689*, Cahiers Lasalliens 56.
9. *Positio Barré*, p. 61. Quotations are from the manuscript in the Archives of *The sisters of Providence of Rouen* which was never fully published, MS of 1677. It was the 1685 edition of the *Statutes and Regulations* that was reproduced in the *Positio*.
10. Y. Poutet, op. cit., Vol I, pp. 392-405.
11. Jean Delumeau, *Sin and Fear. Guilt in the West, 13th to the 18th Centuries*, Paris, 1983, 744 pages.
12. Excessively costly clothes (Furetière's *Dictionary*).
13. The work of Adrian GAMBART, Paris, 1652, 208 pages. It bore a sub-title: *"Homely Instruction for the Simple, Allotted for Each Week of the Twelve Months of the Year."*
14. Jean Eudes, *Jesus, Mary, The Christian Life or Catechism of Mission*, Caen, 1651. Robert Bellarmin, *Catechism, or Fully Set Out Christian Doctrine and Apostles' Creed*, translated from Italian to French by Fr Anthony Pacot S.J., Douai, 1630, 780 pages. Nicholas Turlot, *Treasury Of Christian Doctrine*, 8th edition, Lyons, 1655, 640 pages and 4 of introduction. Phillip D'Ooutreman S.J., *The Christian Teacher*, Lyons, 1656, 579 pages. Simon Cerné, *The Family Teacher*, Paris, Bresche, 1662, 544 pages. The manuscript inscribed "B. Rèche"; this was Peter de Bresche, a Paris publisher, in the Rue Saint-Jacques, from 1606 to 1648. His son, who was also Peter, took over until 1697 (he died in 1708. cf. B.N. *List of printers and Publishers, 1988).*

Chapter Six

INTERACTION BETWEEN CHARLES DÉMIA AND DE LA SALLE

Charles Démia was born in Bourg-en-Bresse in 1637. He became a priest and was appointed special visitor to the parishes of the diocese of Lyons by the archbishop. Then, he became the overall Supervisor of the organization for the "little schools." He died in 1689, three years after Father Barré and two years after Adrien Nyel had died in Rouen. Démia left behind a *School Committee*, a *Teachers' College* known as Saint Charles, a community of women teachers for girls' schools and a group of boys' schools which had adopted his *Regulations for Schools*. His *Remonstrances* to the authorities, distributed in printed form in 1668 launched Nicholas Roland into the school apostolate. Démia also procured some books for John-Baptist de La Salle and praised him in his *Clerical Treasure* published in 1683. He also referred directly to La Salle when, in 1685, he set out for the **Gentlemen of the clergy** the necessity of setting up **Training Colleges for Teachers** on the model of those begun in Lyons and Rheims. The mention of Rheims is an obvious allusion to the *Training College for Country Teachers* or to the *novitiate* of the Brothers of John-Baptist de La Salle.[1] Many differences, however, exist between the educational methods of these two founders.[2]

La Salle does not insist, as does Démia, on the duty of the civil authorities to maintain and multiply Christian schools.[3] His concern for independence in the organization and in the teaching methods used in his schools was an overriding consideration for him. As a result, he did not tie their existence to financial support by the towns or the State.[4] As in all documents of ecclesiastical origin Démia tied his school in with the pastoral ministry of the parish and the diocese. The aspect of "secular instruction" does not have as great an importance in the overall education of the child as in Lasallian pedagogy. For Démia the school remains first and foremost a means of achieving a double objective viz. withdrawing young people from dangerous idleness and providing them with the means of acquiring a satisfactory amount of religious knowledge.[5] For Démia, provision of schools for girls was as great a concern as provision of schools for boys. This was not the case with La Salle once he had finished his duties as executor of Nicholas Roland's will. After that his pedagogy aimed at adapting his schools to masculine psychology. And after one attempt in the school in rue Princesse within the parish of Saint Sulpice in Paris, La Salle gave up training the pupils in his schools for manual work. The children of the poor did not attend his little schools long enough to gain any real profit from having a certain number of hours of apprenticeship training written into their timetables. Démia, on the other hand, wrote in his *Remonstrances*:

> *"There will be no claim that they are urged to become perfect in writing and much less in Latin, but rather they are inspired with a* ***love of work*** *(implying manual work) and with the means of* ***sanctification.*** *There would be a beginning of training by making them work at certain times in these schools at sewing on buttons, knitting, lace-making.*[6]

Probably in 1685, perhaps a little later, Démia published his *Remonstrances to Gentlemen of the clergy concerning the establishment of a junior seminary for the godly education of poor boys who are intended for the most important and neglected roles in the diocese such as those of curate, schoolmaster, catechist, etc....* Furetière would have us understand "boys" as adolescents, aged from 14 to 20-25, in other words, youths cut out for teaching or the priesthood at the start of their careers. At the same period, La Salle, with confidence gained from his contact with the first Brothers, negotiated with the Duke of Mazarin to set up a training college for country school masters.[7] There was, however, a big difference between the two visions. La Salle did not confine his intake to "poor boys." As some of his Brothers were from families of comfortable means and he himself was from a rich family, he did not see why boys endowed with an ample patrimony could not have a vocation to be a lowly teacher or poor priest out of a desire to live out the beatitude, "Blessed are the poor". Nor could he see how you could train in the same college teachers who embraced a style of religious life such as the *Brothers of the Christian Schools*, and teachers destined to live independently of any community in a country presbytery. He was even more at a loss to see how to combine in a single formation center future ecclesiastics who studied Latin and theology, and teachers who preferred to Latin the principles and practices of a pedagogy that was secular as well as religious. He preferred, then, to set up several different systems of formation. He started: 1.a **Training College for country teachers** from which Latin was not banned any more than was the possibility of becoming a priest in order to better help the rural parishes; 2. a **Novitiate** which was for the religious and pedagogical formation of the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* who were destined solely for the towns where their community life would lessen their living expenses and would make easier their perseverance in consecrated celibacy: 3. a **Junior Novitiate** for boys under 16 who made known their intention of choosing the profession of a Christian teacher.[8]

From an educational standpoint, there was another difference between the work of La Salle and the *Saint Charles Seminary* in which ecclesiastical school teachers were trained. La Salle did not teach manual skills which could contribute to the schoolmaster being satisfied with scanty financial remuneration for he thought that school demands "the whole of a man." As opposed to this, Démia wrote:

> *"It was thought that there should be added (to the usual programme)... a modicum of manual work, painting, cleaning the silver, being able to sew and cut out some church vestments,... to*

fold the linen, to keep it neat and tidy, to attend to and decorate the altar... and to take on a thousand little tasks."

If some of the programme of the *Seminary of Saint Charles* may have been adopted by La Salle in his Training College for country teachers first in Rheims, then in Paris and thirdly at Saint Denis near Paris, he developed a very different programme in his novitiate for the Brothers. He did not teach them "to preach a sermon..., to assist the sick in hospital or to become proficient in parish and ecclesiastical duties." He did not "make them study practical pastoral theology." But, like Démia, he taught them "to give a catechism lesson, to instruct young people, guide them in the ways of learning" that is to say in the schools, to discharge themselves worthily of all the duties of a good schoolmaster" if not of a curate.[9] Let us further note that the *Saint Charles Seminary* did not hesitate to offer its recruits to well-to-do families which wanted private tutors for their children. This was something for which La Salle never prepared anyone.[10]

In 1688 another publication of Démia described as important the creation of a training college, no longer for ecclesiastics capable of fulfilling the functions of curates in rural parishes, but specializing in the formation of teachers. It was an *Important notice concerning the setting up of a type of training college for the formation of schoolmasters and for making good use of the property of fugitive Huguenots.*[11] The preoccupation with financing teachers' colleges by means of grants of money coming from confiscations authorized by the king aroused not the slightest interest in La Salle who relied, rather, on the gifts and legacies given by generous people such as the Duke of Mazarin.[12] Démia's plan was all-embracing. He wanted a teacher formation center in each archdiocese. He accepted ecclesiastics but he admitted "that on no account should priests or married people be taken. Priests would be diverted from the complete attention the task requires, either by their sacerdotal duties or by the parish priests of the localities. Moreover, should ecclesiastical benefices come up unexpectedly the teaching positions would become vacant. Married people would also be distracted from wholehearted attention to their position by the cares of their families and by a mercenary frame of mind."[13] His solution lay in the training of clerics "in the four minor orders" during their preparation for the priesthood as was done at Saint Charles. "By instructing children" in the school annexed to the local seminary, "they would learn to instruct the grown-ups," in other words the adults.

La Salle would have nothing to do with that kind of pedagogy because he was less enthusiastic about the possibility of comparing the teaching of adults to that of children. But he understood that elementary schools must be differentiated from colleges. He even insisted that diverse temperaments required different approaches.

The second part of a volume entitled *Regulations for schools in the city and diocese of Lyons* is made up of *A Collection of the Remonstrances, Regulations and Decrees... affecting the schools of the Diocese of Lyons.* In it reference is

expressly made to *The Parish School* "which each one would read carefully as well as the Regulations."[14] It is clear that there is no disagreement, at least on essentials, between the work of Démia and that of Jacques de Batencour.

La Salle took some liberties with each author. *His Conduct of Schools* and his *Common Rules* for the Brothers are self-contained although they owe inspiration in more than one place to various sources. Nonetheless, it is to be noted that reference to *The Parish School* is found in the *Statutes* of the schools approved by the archbishop of Lyons on 28th July 1676, in other words, before the final publication of Démia's *Regulations* in 1688. The latter made the reading of Batencour's book less useful.

An examination of the dates helps us realize that Démia's convictions had evolved and matured. The Lasallian journey was not a replica of Démia's. Rather, one constantly reacted upon the other.

In his very interesting *Charles Démia*, Roger Gilbert quotes from a 146-page manuscript composed in 1684 which was a prelude to the 1688 edition of the famous *Regulations for schools*. While the 1684 manuscript refers solely to "schools for the poor," the 1688 edition is equally applicable to schools for the well-off.[15] The period 1684-1688 is precisely the one in the course of which, in Rheims, La Salle went a step further with his community of teachers and allowed the members to make a vow of obedience for one year and bestowed on them a rule of life which included both the religious nature of their "state" of life and their "work" in the schools. Démia's two *Regulations* (1684 and 1688) include an initiation into Latin which went further than the simple reading of it. La Salle had already rejected this following the lead of Nyel and of the Sisters of Nicholas Roland. But the title used by Démia and which refers exclusively to "schools for the poor" is not limiting, in either of the two texts, to one category of the school population to the exclusion of any other. There is a supposition, that in the schools opened by Démia, an extension to the better-off took place between 1684 and 1688. The *Advice to readers* in the printed version (1688. Municipal Archives, Lyons GG 150) points out, "The regulations that have been drawn up **as much for the schools for the poor as those for the rich**, have been requested by many dioceses. After postponing the printing of them for a long time, and considering the great need that all the schools of this diocese and of many other places in the kingdom have of copies," and after giving "the public a short time ago" *Important advice* on this matter, we have finally made up our minds to have them printed." The reference was to *Important advice* to the clergy on the formation of teachers' colleges which was dated 1688.

This date is important. Charles Démia's *Diary* says specifically that La Salle, "a teacher in the schools for the poor in Rheims," got him to put in an order for some works sold by Comba, a book-seller in Lyons. In August the bill was paid in full. The amount was 80 livres, which was equivalent to six months' salary for a teacher in the little schools.[16] In 1688 the network of Lasallian schools in Rheims, Laon, Rethel, Chateau-Porcien and Guise was judged to be going so well that their "organizer" considered the time to be ripe to settle in Paris and radiate some influence

over more distant dioceses. In the month of February he took charge of a school in the parish of Saint Sulpice in that city. So we are contemplating similar works in the service of schooling for the poor. Really there was no priority of influence of one upon the other as far as the methods and teaching skills devised in Lyons and Rheims were concerned. What is known for certain is that there was an exchange of views.

The volume of *Regulations* made up a whole which was, in the main, didactic. However, some pedagogical principles were clearly expressed. La Salle saw the Brothers as examples only in the context of a form of consecrated life which insisted on the practice of the evangelical counsels even if not all took vows. For his part Démia went into detail on what he demanded as evidence of a Christian life in married teachers, both men and women:

> *"The teachers are urged to be especially careful that their families are well-ordered and that they pray together morning and evening. They should take time in the morning for some serious reflection on those matters most important for their salvation. If possible they should also take time each day for spiritual reading using books such as the Imitation of Christ, the Introduction to the devout life, the Lives of the saints, the Instruction[17] of youth by Gobinet and other similar books. They shall abstain from all suspect contacts and even from going to a tavern for a meal unless thay are traveling... They are urged to attend church services and to receive the sacraments in their parishes at least on Sundays and the principal feasts of the year."*

Démia gave his teachers Saint Charles Borromeo as their patron and organized the Confraternity of Saint Charles to make their ordinary Christian life easier to live and also to lay stress on it. The confraternity met on the first Sunday of various months early in the afternoon. Its leaders saw to it that the regulations were observed in the schools. Some meetings allowed them to examine ways of attaining the greatest proficiency in the schools.[18]

Assuredly the path taken aimed at the perfect living of the Christian life by every teacher authorized to teach in the diocese of Lyons. This path was considered indispensable to guarantee the **Christian character of the school pedagogy** which was in place. La Salle had a similar vision of the formation of children by means of the educational value of the example provided by the teachers. But he steered his teachers towards religious life, not because of its value as a model, since it did not provide the children with the example of family life, but so that the teacher might be totally devoted to the work ministry of the Christian school. The extraordinary availability of the Brothers linked to the considerable amount of time they devoted to school are characteristics too often neglected when the specifics of Lasallian pedagogy are being examined.

In his *Clerical treasure* Démia devoted an important chapter to the duties of the parish priest to the teachers in his parish school. He pointed out the pedagogical value of numerous qualities judged equally necessary by La Salle such as gentleness rather than severity, the necessity of giving good example not just good advice, etc. But La Salle did not see the parish priest as the person directly in charge of his school. In the very first place he saw in the bishop the authority of the Church, which, on behalf of God gave the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* their mission of educating the young when the parents, who have the prime responsibility, enrolled them in school and thereby delegated their authority to the teachers.[19] Many instances of tension with a variety of parish priests showed considerable difference between the two pedagogues. In Paris, when the parish priest of Saint Sulpice wanted to impose clerical dress on La Salle's teachers, the Founder stood up to him and in an important *Memoir on the Habit* justified his decision in favor of their distinctive "religious" habit. When the priest in the parish of Saint Louis in Versailles wanted to keep the Brothers assigned to his school even though La Salle judged that he should go ahead with a transfer, the tension was plain. The overriding principle in the case was that "the school should go well." The same resistance was seen when the bishop of Chartres wanted to lodge the Brothers "in the Saint Vincent house which would be most unsuitable." The Founder wrote in a letter dated 20th July, 1709 that they were to pray to God "that the plans of the bishop not be put into effect" but that what was to happen eventually "would be for the greatest good" and "for an increase in the number of schools and students."[20]

When the parish priest of Saint Sulpice in Paris used some children from the school to act as altar boys for certain ceremonies (Masses, baptisms, marriages, funerals) La Salle requested him to desist from distracting them in that way from their school work. Démia, on the other hand, advised the parish priests to teach "the schoolboys" how to serve Mass, how to hold "a candlestick, the thurible and the cross" and to ask the best behaved "to sweep the church" on certain days.[21] This divergence of view sprang, yet again, from **a somewhat different understanding** of the several aims of the Christian school. La Salle was far from opposed to schoolboys becoming excellent altar boys; but he considered that that apprenticeship should not result in a decrease of time normally allocated to secular instruction.

A rather unusual event which took place in Lyons in 1710 set at loggerheads the supporters of the schools staffed by teachers from *Saint Charles Seminary* and other people who wanted to call in the *Brothers of the Christian Schools*. Démia thought it was possible "at one and the same time to train a good schoolmaster and make him a good priest." In addition, "ecclesiastics always have more aptitude than lay people for teaching the young." The seminarists at Saint Charles engaged in schools taught for only two and a half hours for half the day as the children were needed by their parents "from the age of six or seven" to work in the textile factories. The Brothers spent three hours.[i.e. in the morning and four hours in the afternoon—*Translator's note*]. For the proponents of the Brothers, their vocation, exclusively directed towards schools for the poor, made them more suitable and more earnest

than the ecclesiastics form Saint Charles who divided their time between theological studies and teaching, and considered the latter to be of somewhat secondary importance.[22]

The archbishop Claude de Saint Georges was invited to settle the debate, and he decided to stay with Démia's system in Lyons. Only after the Revolution did typically Lasallian pedagogy make its appearance there, in 1804. Meanwhile, at least until the Lasallian Institute was approved by Rome (1725), the religious and civil authorities (dioceses, provinces, important municipalities, parishes) in choosing the type of school, took into account the local social and institutional conditions, not only in Lyons but in more than half of France. The reason was that the Brothers, in what they did, did not strive to respond to any and every need. Whatever they did was to be specific and suitable for its purpose.

NOTES

1. Y. POUTET,CL 56, *Journal de Démia,* pp. 117, 160, 242, 244-6. A copy of the 1694 edition of *Trésor clérical,* including the corrections indicated by Démia in his *Journal* is in the archival library of the Brothers in Talence.
2. On Démia, Roland and La Salle cf CL 56, pp. 61-70 and 113.
3. CL 56, p. 104, *Remontances.*
4. Y. POUTET, *Le XVIIe siècle et les origines lasalliennes*, Vol II, pp. 41-75 and 135-225.
5. CL 56, pp. 105, 113: "This establishment looks very closely at the salvation of the souls of the impoverished masses... and the supervision of the little schools is the responsibility of the bishops," *Remontrances*, 1688.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110.
7. Y. POUTET, *op. cit.*, pp. 678-703.
8. Cf *Conduite des écoles*, Ed Frère Anselme, p. 319.
9. CL 56, p. 124.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
12. Near Paris, in 1708-1709, a young cleric 23 years of age, the son of the surgeon Julien Clement, offered to finance the purchase of the buildings needed for the Teacher Training College of Saint Denis.
13. CL 56, p. 158.
14. Municipal Archives, Lyons, GG 150, p. 86.
15. R. GILBERT, *Charles Démia*, Lyons, Ed. Robert, 1989, pp. 55, 57-59.
16. CL 56, pp. 218-219.
17. Municipal Archives, Lyons, GG 150, p. 86. Mistakenly, the manuscript has "Introduction" instead of *Instruction.*
18. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
19. *Meditations for the time of retreat,* CL 13, pp. 34, 36.

20. J-B DE LA SALLE, *Lettres*, Critical edition, p. 202 (or English edition 1988 p. 46).
21. *Trésor clérical*, Ed. 1694, p. 250. BLAIN, *op. cit.*, CL 7, p. 295.
22. Y. POUTET, *op. cit.*, Vol II, pp. 243-247.

Chapter Seven

THE LASALLIAN SCHOOL RESPONDS TO SOCIAL NEEDS

When John-Baptist de La Salle was given a pressing invitation to take charge of schools for the people, several fundamental questions remained without real solutions regarding boys. The time was around 1670-1680. The questions asked were:

1. How to have the children of the poor profit from an instruction and an education that was appropriate, given their family and social background?
2. How to ensure that the schools for the poor would have good teachers: that is to say, ones who were competent, of good manners, devoted to their task and willing to stay in the profession?
3. How to put in place a teaching method in keeping with the aims of this type of school?

La Salle did not confront these questions in a theoretical manner before beginning his mission but he certainly did as the time passed and events unfolded. He forced himself to find solutions that were practical, not unchangeable, not fixed once and for all but which would be open to change, in keeping with the progress continually being made. The principal issues were: the raising of status of the poor, the education of delinquents, and the search for fraternal equality.

1. The advancement of schooling for the poor

At around 1670-1680 there were many educational establishments catering to the needs of young people aspiring to the liberal, administrative, legal, commercial or high-ranking military professions. Colleges and universities were financed partly by those who attended them, partly by those thereafter named "founders": cities, bishops, universities, religious congregations, and private individuals. So, in a society of *ranks* (nobility, clergy, middle-class) rather than *classes* (employers, employees), there existed entities capable of giving a worthwhile training for the children of the nobility, of the middle-class, of families who were well-off generally, as well as for children aspiring to the priestly ranks.

It was not the same for the children of those whom La Salle called the "artisans and the poor."

The term "poor" at that epoch meant all those who did not have access to an income capable of allowing them to live otherwise than from day to day or "from hand to mouth." Every period of unemployment, each sickness or accident, every increase in price of foodstuffs as a result of a bad harvest, or ruinous wars made it very difficult to feed a family. The poor were numerous. Those of the noble and middle class who experienced a situation of poverty even constituted what were called the "ashamed poor": they tried to use their circle of friends to hide their poverty, and refused to accept the least assistance.

In the case of the artisans, tradespeople and small business owners, the difficulty of schooling for their children was less, though real. Certainly, to be a day-scholar at a school run by the Jesuits was free; however to limit one's view to that is to overlook the fact that, among the artisans and small business people, children could not wait for adult age to begin earning a livelihood by entering an apprenticeship or by helping their parents.

It must be remembered that among common folk, the average age for getting married was 25-28 years due to lack of money; whereas those of the aristocracy were happy to see their children engaged towards the age of 16-18. Also notable is the fact that among ordinary people there was a manner of speaking, looked down on by the "better classes" which militated against the mixing of the classes. Voltaire well after 1719, the year of the death of John-Baptist de La Salle, would coin the word "canaille" = rabble or riff-raff)) meaning the lower classes and "s'encanailler," as a verb, would signify mixing with the lower classes and adopting their manners.

As a result, before 1680 and well beyond that, the colleges and universities did not suit the real needs of the children of the people to the slightest extent,. The schools of the *Writing Masters sworn as experts before the tribunals* who individually taught pupils desirous of improving themselves in careful writing, in grammar and in arithmetic, the *Masters of small schools and the masters whose pupils lived with them,* who "separated out" the children before they went to the colleges, that is to say, at about nine years of age, did not meet the needs of the poor. As for the *Little schools of Port-Royal*, it is necessary to recall that they had been closed since 1660. In the course of that time, that is to say twenty-three years, they had had not more than a hundred and fifty pupils. Each master had to instruct only a few pupils, never more than six with a programme that aimed to form Latin scholars who would know Greek mathematics, logic and grammar.[1] To look at this as a reference point regarding Lasallian teaching would be to fail to take into account the entire social context which prohibited the comparison of institutions with different aims.

In reality it was the *Poor Committee,* dispensers of general alms, run jointly by the City authorities and the administrators of the General Hospital, clerics and layfolk, who along with the parish clergy, had the real responsibility for the instruction of orphans, abandoned children, children of people that would be classified today as "below the poverty line." It can easily be understood that the element of gratuity which conditioned this elementary instruction was often accompanied by small jobs financially advantageous to the parents, before the children were twelve years old.

The first step in the Lasallian initiative consisted in disavowing every link with the alms-giving authorities to avoid letting it seem that there were "*favors*" reserved to the poor in the establishments judged not so worthy to be frequented by the rich . When Canon Nicolas Roland of Rheims took charge of the orphanage of Madame Varlet, which was financed by main General Hospital and public charity, he had difficulties with the hospital administrators, because he attempted to widen the scope of the work by opening the doors to poor children who were not orphans. His *Sisters of the Child Jesus* opened day schools for girls in four areas of the city. In 1675 there were a thousand pupils. When the layman Adrien Nyel arrived in Rheims from Rouen in 1679 he was only on leave from the General Hospital of Rouen to which he had dedicated himself for life from the year 1658 as general education manager and teacher of the children. He had the experience of education of children of the Hospital, as well as in the training of masters for other free schools which depended financially on the *Poor Committee* of the city. He was tempted to ask the general *Poor Committee* of Rheims to help him set up in this city a universal teaching of poor children similar to Rouen. It was at this point that he met Canon John Baptist de La Salle who advised him against seeking help from the administrators of the *Poor Committee* because they were too opposed to Nicolas Roland. La Salle recommended the only other possible course, which was that of approaching the parishes, because the parish priests had the responsibility for those schools called "schools funded by charity." These were,by their nature freer than those that depended on the *Poor Committee* whose financial worries were considerable.[2] From this decision there flowed the consequence that after the first school for poor boys taken over in Rheims in 1679 in the parish of Saint Maurice, a second was opened in the parish of Saint Jacques, thanks to a generous "foundress." This allowed the school to accept a larger number of pupils. It was still a free school but its clientele was no longer limited just to those who could not afford to pay fees. The notion of a school being open to the children of "artisans" was now added to that of the setting up of a school just for the poor.

A first fixation of the epoch was thus beginning to break down: the differentiation between the pupils who were poor and those who were not so. This did not happen without a struggle. The *Masters of the small schools* and the *Writing Masters*, at Paris especially, began repeated legal proceedings. There were acts of vandalism against the furniture of the Lasallian schools, under the pretext that they accepted children from families who could afford to pay the masters for their tuition. "They are taking away our livelihood" was the cry! But La Salle would not budge: his *Brothers of the Christian Schools* would not take into consideration the financial position of the parents of the pupils. In the most extreme case, following an unfavorable finding by the Chatelet of Paris as also the *Chantre* of the diocese, he accepted that the enrolment of pupils be made by a priest of the parish concerned, but he maintained his principle **of free education for all** no matter who they were.[3] From that time on the children of the poor could come into contact with the conversation and usages current in polite society to which the children of better-off

families were accustomed. These families for their part did not quibble for over a decade at seeing their children mix at school with poorer school-fellows who ,thanks to the efforts of the teachers, had improved their impolite behavior, shed certain vulgarities of expression and even improved their personal hygiene. The acts of opposition of the masters of paying pupils would continue often subsequently in the course of the eighteenth century,without their ever being, however, victorious. The parents would still have a free choice for reasons, one suspects, other than financial in the case of well-off families.

This mingling of children of families in poor circumstances with the children of artisans, of small business people, and even the lower middle class took place only slowly and rarely without some legal procedures begun by those brotherhoods or trade associations which considered they might lose some of their privileges.

2. The special case of Saint-Yon near Rouen

La Salle bent his efforts to the education of the children and their parents to the sense of a generous equality, at a time when the social system remained inegalitarian. The case of Rouen and of one of its suburbs Saint Sever is typical of this. A legal action was brought against the Brothers on Friday, the 2nd of July 1762, on behalf of the *Writing Masters,* once again on the pretext that they were accepting in their schools in Rouen children of well-to-do families whereas their schools had been designated exclusively as "schools for the poor ."[4]

It will be useful to shed some light on this matter.

Departing from his own recommendations made to Nyel in 1679, La Salle, advising him to deal with the parish priests rather than with the administrators of the Hospital of Rheims, La Salle undertook in Rouen in 1705 in response to the request of the the archbishop and of the First President of the *Parlement*, both co-presidents of the *Poor Committee* and administrators of the Hospital to supply two Brothers to run two free schools of the city and to wait on the poor people who were lodged at the Hospital.[5]

On the 19th of May the two Brothers who presented themselves to the Committee were appointed, one to the school of Saint-Godard, the other to a junior class of Saint Maclou, while the higher class remained in the care of the master who had been there previously.[6] On the 11th of August a third Brother, named William, took charge of the higher class of Saint Maclou, while on the 24th of November, Brother Joachim was welcomed by the Office and placed in the school of Saint Eloi. Thus, there were four Brothers paid for by the General Hospital. In keeping with his usual custom,La Salle supplied, without asking for pay, a fifth Brother to run the community and to replace one of the Brothers eventually if one happened to succumb to overwork or sickness.[7] While this was happening, La Salle obtained as of the 13th of May 1705 authorization from the bishop to open in the diocese a "seminary, a type of novitiate for the Brothers of these schools. "[8] It was necessary

to form new masters since in some of the the classes that had been taken over, there were more than a hundred pupils, and occasionally a hundred and fifty per Brother, while the *Conduct of Schools* for the Brothers' use said that the number should not exceed sixty. It was also necessary because the situation of the novitiate at Paris was no longer tenable. The *Writing Masters*, *Masters of small schools* and even the diocesan *Chantre* would not entertain the notion of the centers of formation for the Brothers school masters.

At the same time, La Salle was delighted to find in the Marquise de Louvois who lived in Paris an understanding person. She had inherited at Saint Sever, a suburb of Rouen, the property of Saint-Yon, with house, chapel, stable, outbuildings and land occupying seven hectares. On the 11th of July 1705 she consented to lease the property for six and a half years commencing from the preceding 24th of June, "to lodge the masters in formation for the schools named usually the *Brothers of the Christian Schools*."[9] The transfer of furniture from the novitiate of Paris to the house of Saint Yon was carried out with the greatest secrecy "at the end of the month of August 1705."[10] Three or four priests admitted as retreatants accompanied the novices directed by Brother Barthelemy, the future Superior-General. Brother Thomas, the bursar took care of all the material organization. In the course of that year 1705, both in Paris and at Saint Yon, eleven new Brothers aged 20, 22, 25, 26, 30, 32, 35, 39 and 40 years (several having the same age) strengthened the numbers of the Lasallian institute. Even though it has been lost since that time, the existence of a Register of Postulants, relating to that period shows that entry to the house was not quite the same thing as entry into the future congregation.[11]

From September 1705 on, taking advantage of the school vacations, La Salle gathered to Saint Yon for a retreat of eight days "the greatest possible number of Brothers" available though they were stationed in various schools in several cities. He addressed them in the morning; one of the priests who was with him gave them an address in the evening."[12]

This whole assembling of "boarders", postulants, novices and Brothers and also priests caused tongues to wag. The number of people at Saint Yon hardly decreased after the beginning of the school year in October 1705 because new postulants joined the group, for example Nicolas Lucher, who became Brother Romain on the 23rd of November, Nicolas du Moustier, who took the religious habit under the name of Brother Honoré on the 15th of December and several others between December and March 1706 though the date of their admission is not known.[13] There were also postulants who never became novices.

On the 22nd of March 1706, the parish priest of Saint Sever and the Vicar General of the diocese in the name of the archbishop ratified an agreement by which La Salle was to oblige the Brothers of Saint Yon and their boarders to attend the Easter ceremonies in the parish church, not in their own chapel, to be present at Sunday mass in the parish church, and to give the parish priest the right to admit to their "first communion" the children he would judge "ready to receive it."[14]

If the use of term "boarders" does not lead to the conclusion that a boarding school had been set up, since the term could be applied both to occasional retreatants

and to postulants, the mention of children who had not made their first communion is more explicit. According to the running commentary in *The Duties of a Christian,* edited in 1703 by the founder of the Brothers, this communion was ordinarily made towards the age of twelve years.[15] What was authorized was a small boarding school for children. Enrolments could commence. Without being able to fix an exact date, it seems likely that the first developments of this institution occurred in 1706 and 1707. Two testimonies permit a clearer view of the motives for its establishment.

The first is that of Brother Thomas, reported by Canon Blain, who would one day be a chaplain at Saint Yon:

> "At the beginning of the establishment of the Brothers at Saint Yon I was sent with two or three others by our holy superior then resident in Paris, who, sensing my dislike for a place where there was extreme deprivation, gave me his blessing contrary to his usual custom, and assured me that Divine Providence would watch over us.
>
> A short time later, after I had told him how much suffering the extreme poverty of the place was causing us, he replied that it was his opinion that the means God was using to help us survive was to take in boarders, at a cheap rate initially, and to teach them well and teach them social skills. *You will find in this, he said, the means of gaining the affection and esteem of the people of a city where you are not liked; this will cause you some suffering, but will not last. At any rate, be assured that God will always give you what is necessary for life if you serve Him well. In the fullness of time his words were proved true.*"[16]

The spacious house of Saint Yon, the good behavior of the poor children in the schools run by the Brothers in the city of Rouen, the impossibility of having the children of well-to-do families admitted to free schools that were subject to the Poor Committee, the good example of the young people who lived as postulants at Saint Yon, combined to awaken in the minds of parents who were well-off and who did not wish for their children either schooling by priests trained in the seminaries, or the humanities-type culture of the college of the Jesuits, but one better adapted to their needs for careers in the commercial, trade or secretarial area, the idea that the Brothers could use their property for a small boarding school. "Young boys from the city and surrounding area" were admitted first. After that came children of varying ages. La Salle nominated "one of the most important Brothers "to" instruct them and form them to piety." He edited for them rules suiting their age and their condition.[17]

This adaptation to the different social conditions of the children and young boys obviously indicates a concern not to engage in a confrontation with the mind-set of parents who placed great emphasis on class distinctions. Their satisfaction

caused others to follow their lead. In a short time the number of boarders became considerable. Some arrived "even from Paris."

In the meantime, with the resources provided by the boarding school, La Salle took the trouble to release from their stress the overworked Brothers who were in Rouen and at the Hospital. He reached an agreement on the 2nd of August 1707 with the *Poor Committee* who authorized him to find a house in the city where the teachers could lodge and to increase their number. Instead of four Brothers whose salary was paid by the Committee, he supplied ten. At the school of Saint Vivien one of the Brothers would replace François Levasseur, the old master who had been in charge of the school for forty years, that is to say, since the time when Nyel had been in charge of all the teachers in the free schools in Rouen.[18]

So, with these new arrangements in place, the community of the Brothers in Rouen took up residence and began work near the church of Saint-Nicolas-le-Painteur, where auction rooms were situated in 1935.[19]

All this activity, all these changes in the schools brought simmering animosities to the surface once again. A civil action was brought before the Manager, and the First President of the *Parlement* concerning the house at Saint Yon and its boarding school, whose resources were indispensable to the survival of the Brothers. For the student of pedagogy, this civil action is a stroke of luck.

It was followed in fact around 1708 by a visit from the authorities. La Salle explained to them: "Regarding the boarders, the food they get depends on the amount of board they pay. Some pay only a hundred pounds, others pay five hundred pounds. There are some who pay two, some three and some four hundred, so it is only right that the difference in price is reflected in the food they receive. In any case, all are in good health." After their visit, the Manager and the First President were so happy with what they had seen that they declared they would not take notice of any further criticisms which might be brought to them.[20]

Treating the children differently in keeping with the income of their parents seems by today's standards contrary to the principle of equality of citizens enshrined in the constitution of the French republic. In fact, this inequality of meals in the boarding school at Saint Yon enabled the Brothers to educate the children to live harmoniously, without jealousy or vindictiveness in a society demonstrably unequal. It extended to the boarders what the children of the working classes and the poor in the free schools were accustomed to receive in accordance with the *Conduct of Schools* (in its initial version): that breakfast should be taken in the classroom, in order to teach them how to behave and, in addition, so that those who had nothing could receive from the teacher something from those who had too much, and which became common property. It was not a question of of a gift from rich student to poor, but a redistribution through the good offices of the teacher applying a rule of strict justice. It was an effective educational and social lesson.[21]

Two other episodes deserve mention. The reputation of the boarding school gave to some parents who had insolent and uncooperative children the idea that the Brothers of Saint Yon could remedy this situation. Moreover, the First President of

the *Parlement* of Normandy insisted in 1715 that La Salle open at Saint Yon an establishment reserved for the education of children committed by the courts or by a letter from the king. La Salle accepted. Two supplementary groups were thus formed: a boarding school **for ones who could be rehabilitated** and one where **the inmates were confined.**

The classroom with "young boys who were uncooperative and difficult" was given to a Brother who was with them all the time. However, their "education was not in any way different" from that of the boarders who were better behaved. All "ate in a common dining room with the Brothers and were present at the different times of prayers. This presence had the most effect on them and what had inspired their desire to return to God."

Those who were in the "confined" section were kept apart, at first in the solitude of their room, then when their disposition improved they were admitted to the exercises of piety that were practised in the place.[22]

The whole institutional group belonged to social strata that were quite different; opposites even, and La Salle demanded that his Brothers showed the utmost respect for all the children because they were equal before God and also because they themselves, humble Brothers, should not consider themselves as superior to anyone, in order to share in the humility of the Son of God made man.[23]

The same respect, yes, but not the same teaching techniques, which were varied according to the group in question.[24] It was a teaching strategy intelligently suited to the moment that was applied here, a teaching strategy that was always modified according to the progress made in relation to the young men taken in charge, in each of whom the teachers of Saint Yon saw a person who deserved attention.

3. Education for brotherhood in an unequal society

The publication in 1703 of *The Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility* went some way towards alleviating the social inequalities which were a hallmark of the 17th century. By this work La Salle aimed to encourage in the pupils a real knowledge of good manners as the opportunity arose when they were learning to read in a book published in gothic characters, much less easy to read than the usual style. One can see clearly that the social disparities are neither condemned, nor presented as permanent. They exist and form part of a society which reflects the customs or a region and of an era. So to function harmoniously in such a society, it is necessary to learn to live with this. [25]

In order to lessen antagonisms present in society, La Salle asked his Brothers to accustom the children to polite gestures and words which were not always in wide use in the social strata in which they had been brought up. He admitted, however, that it would be ridiculous for a person who was neither noble nor middle-class to affect the manners of someone in high society. This was the thought inherent in

Moliere's play *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*. But La Salle invited the Brothers to put the rules of propriety and decorum into practice "only for Christian motives," in other words, to act in accordance with the gospel maxims of brotherly love. He insisted that what would be normal behavior in the "presence of royalty "was not appropriate elsewhere, and that certain familiarities with persons "whom one knew well" were not acceptable in the company of others and that in all circumstances it was necessary to "be sensitive to the social level" of those one met. He insisted on the necessity of examining one's own social condition to avoid blunders which would make one seem out of place. He wrote: "It is necessary to take stock of one's situation.... for the person who is an inferior to others either by birth or by reason of employment must pay them respect,... a peasant for example must give more outward respect to the overlord of his estate than a craftsman who does not depend on the overlord for his living, and yet this craftsman would have to pay more respect to the overlord than a visitor of the same status" would.[26]

In all the details of the book of *The Rules of Christian Decorum* there emerges a clearly-defined wish to educate the children of the poor in such a way that they would not be ashamed of their "condition." In this way they were initiated into the ways of polite society, or at any rate into the ways of a society less coarse than their own. So they were told: "There are people who spit on the floor or into the air; a person who is well brought up should not stoop to crass and rude behavior of this type."

A lot of other social requirements deserve mention. These will appear in the third part of our study, which is set aside for characteristics of the Lasallian method of teaching. The second part examines how La Salle made up for the absence of centers of formation for masters destined for popular schools for boys, which is one of the main deficiencies of the educational world of the 17th century.

NOTES

1. F. Delforge, *les petites écoles de Port-Royal*, p. 213ff.
2. Y. Poutet, *Le XVIIE siècle et les origines lasalliennes*, Rennes, 1970, Vol I, p. 494ff.
3. *Ibid.*, Vol II, p. 120.
4. A.M. Rouen, carton 281, translated by G. Panel, *Documents concernants les pauvres de Rouen*, Rouen, 1919, Vol II, p. 262.
5. Archives départmentales Seine-Maritime, register E 16 , Deliberation of 31 March 1705.
6. *Ibid., Committee meeting on 19 May 1705.*
7. J.-B. de La salle, *Conduite des écoles*, edited by Brother Anselm, General Procure, 1951, p. 119.
8. CL 42, p. 302.
9. J.-B. Blain, Vol II, p. 30.

10. *Ibid., pp. 30-31.*
11. CL 3, pp. 40-42.
12. J.-B. Blain, Vol II, p. 31.
13. CL 3, pp. 42-44.
14. A document quoted in CL 11, p. 65.
15. CL 20, p. 156.
16. J.-B. Blain, volume II, p. 264.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
18. Decision taken 2nd August 1707, quoted in Panel, volume II p. 141 and in Y. Poutet, *op. cit., volume I p. 500.*
19. Canon Farcy, *Le Manoir de Saint-Yon,* Rouen, 1935, p. 36.
20. J.-B. Blain, volume II, p. 405.
21. *Conduite des écoles*, the edition in CL 24, p. 7.
22. J.-B. Blain, volume II, p. 33.
23. J.-B. de La Salle, *Méditations pour les fêtes*, CL 12, part 2, pp. 154 and 225.
24. *Conduite des écoles*, edited by Brother Anselm, pp. 161-170. With reference to lasallian orthopedagogy, cf. Brother Othmar Würth, *La pédagogie de J.-B. de La Salle*, Rome, FSC Mother House, 1972.
25. *Règles de la bienséance et de la civilité chrétienne*, Preface, pp. 4 and 5 in CL 19.
26. *Ibid.*, 6th page of the preface.

Part 2

Teacher Training

Chapter One

A NEW PEDAGOGICAL STRUCTURE: THE BROTHERS OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

What France lacked most of all in the 17th century as regards the education of the children of the masses was not schools even if they were gratuitous, since the majority of town parishes already had them, but rather skilled teachers devoted to and persevering in their work and ready to receive, without an increase in salary, a greater number of school-age pupils for their elementary classes. Too often it happened that existing schools accepted only few pupils because the teachers did not want to have an increasing number of non-paying pupils. All sorts of arguments could be adduced to explain absence from school, for the simple reason that parents, both mother and father, needed to work to make ends meet and were scarcely in a position to keep watch on how their children, be they ever so young, used their time when not engaged in some task, such as looking after the younger children or carrying out little jobs that earned a reward...

Step by step De La Salle was to change this situation.

He did not start with a preconceived idea, from an overall intuition, or from a utopia that deserved to be realized. He was guided, rather, by a sequence of events which, as he declares *in his Memoir of the Beginnings*, he in no way foresaw.

> *"To take over the care and management of schools for boys ... I never gave it a thought... not that it had not been suggested I do so... but it had never entered my mind and I never had the slightest thought of doing so: if I had even considered that the care I took of the teachers out of pure charity, would have ever led me to regard it as my duty to live with them, I would have abandoned the whole idea... The very thought of having to live with them would have been repugnant to me... It was evidently for this reason that God who directs all things with wisdom and gentleness... wanting to have me take over completely the management of the schools, arranged to bring it about almost imperceptibly in such a way... that one commitment led to another without my having in any way foreseen what was taking place."*[1]

This slow process leading to the establishment of a new form of pedagogy had its beginnings in 1679 but it did not come to a halt with the official recognition of the *Brothers of the Christian Schools*, whether by Rome, or by the King of France

and the Rouen *Parlement* (1724-1725). The form of pedagogy established by La Salle was to bring a renewal to the pedagogies of his time. It would overcome the problem, which had been up to this time insurmountable, of keeping the teachers constant in their work and satisfied with a low wage while devoting themselves to work in boys' schools that were gratuitous for all. This form would result in the establishment of a teaching congregation, suited to the needs of the people and able to modify its teaching practices to effect the advancement of its pupils. The congregation in question would be the *Brothers of the Christian Schools*.

1. The pedagogical structures of the 17th century

The forms of 17th century pedagogy that La Salle would renew were those directed to the children of artisans and the poor and to boys' schools only.

In Rheims, the *Precentor*, also a Canon of the Cathedral was the one responsible for the little schools. La Salle had some connection with him, for he was John Roland, the uncle of that Nicolas, the foremost leader in the development of the *Sisters of the Child Jesus*, a teaching community.[2] When he became Vicar General for Monsignor Le Tellier, Archbishop of Rheims, he would have been in agreement with the latter when La Salle was arranging to have the diocese pay for the upkeep of his community of teachers, provided he was willing to make them a diocesan institution. But La Salle refused this idea, and following advice from Father Barré, he planned to extend this work more widely, first of all as far as Paris.

By acting in this way, he would be independent of those pedagogical forms that were controlled by *Precentors*, Superintendents of Schools (*Écolâtres*) any and every parish priest, bishop or hospital administration taking care of the poor and orphans. This independence, nevertheless, had to be cognizant of the fact that in accordance with French law of that period, elementary teaching remained under Church jurisdiction.

This Lasallian development differed strongly from that of Charles Démia who established a School Administration at Lyons, while he himself remained the diocesan director of schools with the title of Promotor.[3] If the financing of Lasallian schools sprang from various traditional sources, the mandate to teach and the choice of pedagogical methods used by each teacher depended only on the one superior of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the latter having been commissioned by the bishop, or a parish priest to take control of such and such a school. When a town council offered to finance La Salle's teachers, he was always eager to seek out first the agreement of the parish priest of the place, and that of the bishop of the diocese. De La Salle believed that if the teachers had authority from the parents of scholars, they had it also, in Christian schools, from the Church, represented by the appointed parish priest and by the bishop of the region. He would take an even much longer step when he sent Brother Gabriel Drolin and a confrere to Rome to look after one

of the Pope's schools and in this way prepare the ground for papal approval. The Church in its supreme authority was to be the guarantor of his fidelity as a Christian, without in any way taking away from the subsidiarity represented by bishops and parish priests, and this in the days before theological or pastoral discussion had established its justification on doctrinal grounds.[4]

In such a climate what place existed for a secular (i.e. non-clerical) pedagogy?

In this case the needs of parents and children played a leading role. La Salle set out to be at their service and brought all his pedagogical knowledge to bear upon the matter. Thus, there arose and developed the Institute of the *Brothers of the Christian Schools*, a name highly significant of its double purpose of being Christian and concerned with schools. It is incorrect to speak of them as has sometimes happened, as *Brothers of Christian Doctrine*. There were, indeed, schools of Christian Doctrine founded by César de Bus in the 17th Century, but these were really colleges and not "little schools," and the Congregation of the Brothers of Doctrine included a majority of priests. There was also in Spain and in Italy the congregation of the *Clerks Regular of Pious Schools* or *Piarists*, but these likewise stemmed from the clergy and developed their teaching procedures well beyond elementary or professional standards, with a pronounced bias for Latin studies.

There has been a lengthy examination to unravel an evolution in Lasallian thinking as to the words "community," "society," "association," "institute," "congregation." The ban by the Council of Trent on the establishment of new religious "Orders" plus the almost instinctive revulsion in Louis XIV towards the multiplication of religious "houses" led La Salle to be most circumspect in his choice of words. "Community" and "Institute" were expressions less likely to be questioned than other terms. To make "a vow of association" or to "live in society" might well be terms used to describe a secular contract in the world of business. God was taken as witness instead of a justice of the peace but the signatories remained "secular" and did not become socially attached to the state of "regulars", that is to say, of religious answerable to both civil and ecclesiastical law. As for the word "congregation," La Salle uses it only twice, first in the "*Common Rules*" when he requires the Brothers not to belong "to any confraternity or congregation," the two words being regarded as synonymous for a pious movement or group. In the second instance, the word is repeated in several of his letters with regard to the "Congregation of Saint Lazarus" founded by St. Vincent de Paul and hence with no connection with the *Brothers of the Christian Schools*.[5]

One of the principal results stemming from the organization of the teachers into a **community** bonded to a **congregation** was to have them remain stable in their vocation as educators.

2. The process of settling the teachers

The first teachers recruited by Adrien Nyel for the Rheims area learned from him how to teach children to read and write. They were unmarried, but in no

way contracted to spend the rest of their lives as schoolteachers. As from Christmas 1679, La Salle arranged lodging for them in a house adjacent to his own, in this way enabling them to live in community and follow a set of regulations. Thus, he was in an even better position to get to know them, to lead them to speak and generally live in a more civilized fashion than was customary for them.[6]

A further step forward was taken, not without problems, on the 24th June the following year, when he had the teachers eat at the family table with his brothers.

The situation became a clash of two cultures. Briefly, de La Salle and his brothers imparted some of their good taste and polite refinements to the teachers "of the lower class."[7] But faced with protests from uncles and aunts, La Salle rented another house for the teachers, very close to the present-day site of the school of St. John-Baptist de La Salle in the rue de Contrai and proceeded to live there with them (24th June, 1682). There followed the organization of life along religious lines, with community prayer, spiritual and pedagogical conferences and regulations for a stable kind of existence.

One thing became evident. The uniform manner of teaching the children was reinforced by the teachers' community life-style, which allowed them to live more frugally than if they had the care of a family. Given the situation of the times, this life-style was absolutely necessary if the school was to remain gratuitous and if parishes and municipalities were not to be excessively levied for financial aid. Likewise, this community life-style had both psychological and pedagogical advantages. It provided each teacher with those elements of social life that a family, of which he had no part, could not offer. This resulted in mutual encouragement and a sharing of teaching experiences. These experiences were such that when added to those of Adrien Nyel, and examined in the light of the eighteen years teaching experience of Jacques Batencour as expressed in "L'Ecole paroissiale" (1654 re-edited 1685), the *Management of Christian Schools* of John-Baptist de La Salle (ms. 1705, edited 1720) was able to be developed.

The way in which its author was led step by step to organize the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* indicates that he began to assist the teachers "only exteriorly" without in any way planning to give them the status of religious. His initial efforts were directed towards discovering that life-style most suited for making the schools for the masses fully gratuitous and Christian. Over a period of time the entire enterprise had to be conditioned by the need for the school's success. The school must "function well" and must be attractive for families and their children.

This first decision of living in common with a view to have the teachers persevere in their function was followed by the adopting of a distinctive habit which was neither ecclesiastical nor totally secular. It bore witness to a strong desire to remain celibate in order to be more available for the service of God and of schools in varying places. The vow of obedience along with that of stability would later on be completed with the taking of vows of poverty and chastity as required by the Papal Bull of Benedict XIII. From this point the Brothers of the Christian Schools would be canonically defined as a congregation of lay religious (non-priests) with simple vows.

3. The Brothers of the Christian Schools, a pedagogical form

Indeed, the form of pedagogy that La Salle would establish was that of a teaching community. In the towns such as Rheims or Rouen, he saw room for a single community where the teachers resided, while managing as many as four schools in each town, one for each district. The savings in economy were quite evident as to general expenses since there was a need for only one cook and one director. The value and the quality of the exchange of teaching experiences were four-fold since the teachers from their own four schools were able to provide one another with ongoing formation. This they did at weekly meetings and at what La Salle calls "recreation," that is to say during the half-hours of conversation, preferably engaged in while walking, with a view to having some form of physical exercise after the mid-day or evening meal. The younger teachers learned from the older ones a multitude of tricks of the trade or pedagogical methods graded and judged according to their greater or less efficiency.

If the Director of the principal community was at one and the same time religious superior and director in charge of the four schools; each of the schools would have a teacher-in-charge called "First teacher" or "sub-director" or even "Inspector." It was he who, on site, had dealings with parents for enrollments, or with each teacher for the monthly register of the pupils' progress, a register arising from the necessary change of classes or levels, since "beginners," "less advanced" and "advanced" make up three sections in each of the principal subjects; reading, writing and arithmetic. Means of emulation, of encouragement, and of correction came under his jurisdiction as well as the overall supervision of the school.

With authority over the directors of different communities spread over various French provinces, there would ultimately be Visitors whose task would be to examine some of these communities.

For quite some time, La Salle acted as Visitor for the Paris region. From 1708-1711 Br. Ponce was "Visitor" for all communities south of the Loire River.[8] Brother Joseph, Director in Paris[9] was sent by an obedience dated 16th November 1711 to "make the visit of the communities of Moulins, Dijon, Troyes, Rheims Rethel, Laon, Guise, Calais, Boulogne, Rouen, St Yon, Darnétal, Chartres, Versailles and Saint-Denis" (this latter near Paris).[10]

The visit included an inquiry into what the teachers wanted, the needs of the directors of the communities who were also the headmasters of the schools, as well as an evaluation of the pupils' work and of the teachers' preparation for their classes. At this period the Visitor had no authority to change personnel. Changes were reserved to the Superior, John-Baptist de La Salle, until the General Chapter of 1717, despite La Salle's keen desire to bring about an election of a Brother to this position. There was the fear lest someone at some future date might put forward the example of John Baptist to suggest that a priest would be required to govern the society. So it was that in 1717 Brother Barthélemy, who had already completed classical studies and who was "a good theologian" though by no means a cleric,

became Superior-General. In fact, La Salle had allowed him to carry out almost all duties of Superior since 1712.

One of the problems resulting from entrusting the role of Superior to a person who was not a priest stemmed from the fact that each month or every second month, the Superior received the written "redditions" of all Brothers. These were confidential letters seeking spiritual advice or pedagogical or administrative guidance. La Salle gave much time to the task of answering these letters. However, with the development of the Institute, it was necessary for later General Chapters to elect as aids to the Superior, Brothers Assistants who would divide up the school communities and respond to the *redditions* on a geographical basis. Likewise, they would serve as a normal referral point for the appointment of directors to the communities and for the transfer of teachers.

Each teacher could have recourse to his Assistant if he was not happy with what the Visitor had ordered or advised, and as a last resort he might appeal to the Superior-General. Neither parish priest, nor bishop, nor the Pope were in this hierarchy of appeal, although various Lasallian Superiors were able to seek advice and support at the different levels of ecclesiastical authority. In the secular area, the pedagogy set in place depended solely on the directives expressly given by the Lasallian superiors, though these latter took note of the decrees or directions arising from civil authorities since each school was at the service of society in general whether it was a question of the State, the Church, families as well as children. This Lasallian pedagogical form, far from being burdensome, was freed from the abuse of authority. It likewise ensured an ongoing formation, as much after years of experience as in the early stages of teaching. Tradition and imagination work in harmony. *The Common Rules* of 1718, for example, stressed the importance of the Brother Director of each Community House, in so far as he assumed the role of director of the school and director of the religious community. We read in these Rules thus:

> *The Brothers "shall not have anything written or copied by any pupil, either for themselves or for any other person whatsoever without the permission of the Brother Director who shall examine whether it is necessary... No Brother shall have the use of rod or strap at school except the one appointed by the Brother Director. The Brother of one class shall not pay attention to what takes place in another, unless charged therewith by the Brother Director... No Brother shall speak to another in school except to the one to whom the Brother Director has committed the direction of the school. No Brother, except the one appointed by the Brother Director, shall speak to persons coming to the school (parents, merchants, etc.) and he shall, the same day, tell the Brother Director what persons called, and their reasons for calling...* They may allow... a teacher to enter who wishes to acquire the method of teaching, *provided he has the written permission of the Brother Director."*[11]

"The Brothers... shall be mindful not to address themselves to him (their Director) but as to one invested with God's authority... They shall receive the advice given them... as given by God himself, seeing in him only the authority of God... which he represents ... The Brothers shall have the same submission... for the one who holds the place of the Brother Director (sub-Director, principal teacher, or inspector).

Above all they shall not ask for... any permission which the Brother Director has refused them."[12]

"The Brother Director shall write every month (to the Brother Superior), the first month giving an account of his own conduct... and the second month an account of the Brothers and of the schools."[13]

"When there are several feasts in the week, the Brother Director will give a conference on the Sunday and on the day of the most important feast, and when he is unable to give a conference, he will have a good book read and then ask for the opinions of several Brothers by way of a conference."

In the afternoon of holidays (Thursdays) "they shall go for a walk if the weather permits, otherwise they shall recreate together... in the house. Some of the time can be spent in reading... from books chosen by the Brother Superior such as... Travels in the Holy Land, The Martyrs of Japan *and others suited to recreation."*[14]

Chapter 11 of The Common Rules deals with the Inspector of Schools. The role of Inspector is an essential element in the Lasallian form of pedagogy. However, the Inspector is not different from the Brother Director except when the Brothers' community has charge of several schools in different sections of the town. In this situation, a given community might have as many Inspectors as there are schools:

"There shall be an Inspector to superintend all the schools, who shall usually be the Brother Director; should there be need of several in a house (meaning a community), he or they who, besides the Brother Director, fill this office, shall report to him at least twice a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, what they have noticed in the conduct of each of the Brothers in his class, and **whether the pupils conduct themselves well or not...** *The Brothers shall have a great respect for the Inspector of the Schools ... and the teachers of a school shall have much respect for him, who has the management of the school by order of the Brother Director, in the absence of the Brother Inspector."*

The *Management of Christian Schools*, published in 1720 contains only two sections, while a manuscript version kept in Paris (Bibliothèque nationale, ms.

Fr. 11 759) dated at the latest 1706, devotes numerous pages to the *Duties of the Inspector of schools* under the heading of the *Third Section*.[15]

These pages are very enlightening about the formal organization of Lasallian schools:

> *"The director will be this Inspector; if there are three or four schools dependent on the community of which he is the Director, he can be given (by the Superior of the Institute) another Brother to help him in the inspection of the schools. He will be careful to ensure that the rules and customs of the school are observed exactly, without change or alteration.*
>
> *The duty of the Inspector of schools includes...*
>
> *1. The practice of vigilance... over both teachers and pupils.*
> *2. The allotment of teachers to respective classes (and to particular group levels) for each lesson.*
> *3.. The promotion of teachers to more advanced lessons when they are capable of so teaching."*[16]

Vigilance is brought to bear upon the furnishing and cleanliness of the rooms, the exactitude with which teachers begin and end their lessons at the required time, on their care not to take their eyes off their pupils, to correct the children's faults; on the teachers' efforts to treat the children with justice and equality. Likewise, vigilance extends to how catechism is taught, **with what degree of mildness the teachers administer punishment**, never striking pupils "with foot, hands or pointer," the exactitude of pupils in attending lessons, their good conduct at school and in the street, their dutifulness and regularity in attending parish services, on the behavior of the "officers" (pupils given certain responsibilities at school). Teachers and inspectors "must make every effort to maintain good order in their schools and this in a spirit of unity and dependence, and with a sense... of doing exactly... what God requires of them."[17]

It is for the Director alone, or the Inspector in his absence, to have control of the register of enrollments of pupils, who must be introduced by their mothers or fathers. They are to be enrolled only after the completion of their sixth year, unless "intelligence and size make up for lack of age." Those who are carriers of contagious disease, or "simple-minded," unable to learn but still likely to be a disturbance in class, are to be excluded. Likewise to be excluded are those who would have to be absent from school for more than twice each week no matter for what reason. But it is possible to take in any pupil, who by reason of some work or employment cannot arrive at school until after classes have begun, on the condition that the hours of arrival are regulated. Those who cannot come except in the afternoon can also be accepted on the condition that they attend the Catechism lesson at the end of the day.[18]

On the occasion of each pupil's enrollment, the Inspector will find out the pupil's ability and then assign him to a particular "class and lesson and the room he is to be in." He shall place him "next to someone who can help him to follow the lesson easily." He shall be careful to see that "writers" be placed in such a position that they will be able to have "good lighting" for their writing. He is to see to it that lice-infected pupils whose parents are neglectful of them, are kept separate from those who are clean... that a giddy, scatter-brained student is placed between two pupils who are well-behaved and sedate, etc. While trying to group all the pupils following the same lesson into the one class, the Inspector must arrange them so that their number does not get above 50 or 60.

A host of other recommendations lets the Inspector know how he is to go about grading the scholars correctly for their respective classes and lessons, whether it be for reading, writing, or arithmetic.[19]

Each month the Inspector is to forewarn the teachers as to the day when he will **change groups** of pupils according to their ability. As a general principle, each scholar advances from one group to the next, unless he is incapable of doing so, or has missed school or wishes to remain in his previous group to better improve himself. However, with a view to offset the temptation to laziness, rewards are to be given to those who show they are capable of advancement to the next group. The details of this procedure are rather in the order of instructions, and need not be outlined in these pages.[20]

4. The Brothers of the Christian Schools and how their structure evolved

The formal adjustment of the pedagogical methods established by John Baptist de La Salle dates from the 1717 General Chapter from which issued the text of the Common rules (1718) and the *Management of Christian Schools* printed in 1720. However, it is only with the reception of Royal Letters Patent (28th September, 1724) and the Papal Bull of Approbation of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (26th January, 1725) that civil and canonical recognition are granted to the Institute as to an **ecclesiastical and state** corporation for the Christian and gratuitous education of children.

The youthful Louis XV, aged 14, was anointed king in Rheims only two years after the Brothers were given *Letters Patent*. The Archbishop of Rouen and the First President of the Rouen *Parlement*, Nicolas Pierre Camus de Pontcarré, were the persons responsible for securing this legal recognition. As was usual, an establishment was required to have full property rights as a guarantee to the State which wished in no way to have to take the risk of being ultimately responsible for old or infirm religious deprived of the means of support. In fact, approval is granted not so much to the religious congregation but rather to the "House of St. Yon, in the parish of St. Sever, a suburb of Rouen, which serves as the official headquarters of the society of the *Brothers of the Christian Schools*.

The preliminary procedures indicated that the gratuitous schools directed by the Brothers in various French towns did not need special Letters Patent because these schools were set up in dioceses only with the permission of the Bishops, which was sufficient to make them legal.

The text of the Letters Patent[21] was basically concerned with the Community House of the Brothers of St. Yon and as accessories those communities which were dependent on St. Yon since they were set up and organized only by the decision of the Superior General who resided there.

This text begins by calling to mind the facts which make the Institute's existence legal.

> *"Louis, by the grace of God, King of France and of Navarre, to those present and to come, greetings... Monsieur Colbert, Archbishop of Rouen and Monsieur Pontcarré... First President in our Court of the Parlement of this city... eager to remedy the ignorance prevalent among the poor... whose children unable to attend the usual schools remain as vagabonds and wanderers in the streets, lacking discipline, and ignorant of their religion... after due consideration that there was no better means for remedying this situation than to summon (the Brothers of the Christian Schools) of the Institute of the late Monsieur John-Baptist de La Salle priest, doctor of theology... to establish a charity school in the aforesaid city of Rouen where the poor would be able to receive a Christian education and at the same time to be taught gratuitously how to read, write and calculate; as the example of similar schools in several other towns... and especially in the good city of Paris would have led the aforesaid archbishop and the aforesaid First President not to neglect... a work so useful to the people generally and to the State with the result that this establishment would, as a consequence, come to be considered as a place suited not only for the purposes of a school to teach wisdom to the poor... but in addition to be a place for correcting the dissolute whose disorders would be a public scandal."*[22]

As a consequence of all this, the pedagogical form peculiar to the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* was confirmed in its independence, subject to a few legal and fiscal limitations. The document specifically mentions only the diocese of Rouen and the Normandy province, because the fundamental ownership rights indispensable for such royal approbation are relevant only to the land and buildings of St. Yon. La Salle, in fact, personally rented or bought only such buildings that were needed for the novitiate, or for the training house for country schoolmasters. Everywhere else, with the exception of Rheims where he was the owner, together with two or three other persons, it was parishes or municipalities which would have ownership

of the buildings. The Brothers would be employed and remunerated by them. However, it is important to realize that parishes and municipalities had at their disposal funds for schools only as a result of gifts, or foundations in perpetuity arising from legacies. French law of the period clearly stated that schools "are of ecclesiastical right" so that civil authorities can promote, subsidize or control them only within the framework of general legislation applicable to a given situation. From the time when the Brothers of the Christian Schools were established at St. Yon, they could be forthwith sent to any town in France to conduct schools that municipalities or parishes wished to entrust to them, under episcopal control naturally.

The Letters Patent make, indeed, the following precision:

> *"Following advice from our Council, who have seen the bill of purchase of the aforesaid House of St. Yon... we will that the aforesaid petitioners continue to dwell in the aforesaid house to train there not only those destined to conduct charity schools and* to be sent to different towns in our kingdom, *but in addition to take care of the charity school where they will teach the principles of the Catholic, apostolic and Roman faith to those children that will be sent to them from the aforesaid city, suburbs, and outskirts of Rouen and will teach them also to read, write and calculate - doing all this* **gratuitously;** *we permit them to house boarding students of good will who will be sent to them, and the subjects of the Kingdom who will be sent to them on our instigation and by order of our Court of Parlement at Rouen with a view to their correction.*
>
> *Wherefore we also grant and concede to the aforesaid petitioners the right to be able... to own all the funds and properties that may be made to them by deed of will or by donations... without infringing in any way the rights due to other Lords of the nobility as well as to us... of which so far as concerns those belonging to us we have made them a gift or total remittance now and for the future."*[23]

La Salle was keen to retain a real independence so far as pedagogical methods were concerned, especially in the manner of teaching catechism to the pupils. The religious dimension of the Lasallian school was integral to its purpose. La Salle in 1705 wrote to Drolin in Rome: "Concerning catechism, it seems to me that it is... of importance that you teach it in your school." He was very happy when Drolin told him that he had finally succeeded in being given the direction of "a Papal school." This was in October 1709. The news, sent from Rome on 7th November, reached La Salle only at the beginning of February 1710, who then replied on the 14th: "I am so glad that you now have a Papal school. It is what I have been hoping for... I know you have plenty of work to do where you are and I rejoice that you have a good number of pupils."[24]

On the 12th May 1710, La Salle wrote insisting on the necessity of maintaining unity, both in matters religious and pedagogical, between the Brother in

Rome and the Brothers in France. To help in this matter, he promised to send to Brother Drolin two books of prayers for the pupils: "I shall send you two copies of the school prayers. There are some at Avignon" and La Salle adds "you must try to increase the number of your students."[25] A letter of 24th August 1711 suggests an almost unreal hope: "Let me know just how things are with you. Since the Pope has six schools in Rome, it would be very desirable if they were all in the hands and under the direction of our Brothers."[26]

However, the sometimes strained relationship between the French Court and the Papal Court in Rome necessitated a considerable diplomatic prudence. The Royal Letters Patent did no more than foreshadow the favorable reception by members of French *Parlements* of a more general and more typically religious document emanating from the Sovereign Pontiff himself. In effect, the Papal Bull of 26th January 1725 was officially recorded as received on the Court Register of the Rouen Parlement on 12th May 1725 to the advantage of the "*Brothers of the Christian Schools* of St. Yon."[27] For this reason, the Brothers, unique of their kind and for their period in not having as superior a priest, ecclesiastic, nor even a "chaplain" required by their Rules, nor by canon law, came to be commonly known as "Yontains" because they were the Brothers of St. Yon.[28]

Without making the Brothers of the Christian Schools a religious order with solemn vows, the Papal Bull of Benedict XIII classified them as a non-clerical congregation with simple vows, dispensation from which was reserved to the Sovereign Pontiff. This Bull, entitled "In Apostolicae dignitatis solio" stands out as a special date in the history of male congregations with simple vows.[29] Article 5 of the Bull confirms simultaneously and without exception the text of the Common rules and the vow formula which say that the Brothers are "to teach gratuitously" in an absolute manner, without limiting gratuity to the poor. Nevertheless, Article 9 speaks "of teaching the poor gratuitously." It did not forbid the Institute from seeking payment from families that wanted a boarding facility or supplementary education. The priority in Lasallian schools remained the form of instruction suited to the needs of the poor, without closing the doors to other social groups but always ensuring gratuity for all, with boarding schools being an exception. Acting in this way was to go counter to the claims of "mercenary teachers," who were ever ready to react with a view of forbidding the entrance of the children of families capable of paying the teachers to gratuitous schools.

The style of religious life, with its rule of living in common adapted to suit its teaching purposes, reinforced the pedagogical form of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. A reading of the Royal Letters Patent gives the impression that there was some anxiety not to give offense to the teaching body which sought control of secular instruction, and then the reading of the Papal Bull with its emphasis on religious objectives, gives the impression that La Salle had organized his community of teachers for the purposes of teaching catechism and forming the young to piety.

The historical reality was otherwise. It was in order that the teachers, who had come to realize it for themselves, might be able to attain to the perfection of

their mission to educate the poor, that La Salle led them step by step to a life in common, with detachment from riches, then to a simple vow of obedience and of teaching gratuitously. He did all this before constituting them as a true religious teaching congregation worthy of the double approval from king and Pope.

Several articles of the Bull of 1725 give confirmation of this organization of the Brothers along pedagogical lines.

> *"The Brothers should make it their chief care to teach children, especially poor children, those things which pertain to a good and Christian life... that zeal for the education of youth should be... so to speak the spirit of their Institute...*
>
> *That they obey the Superior General... elected by themselves.*
>
> *That the Assistants... take part in his deliberations...*
>
> *That the said Brothers teach children gratuitously and that they receive neither money nor presents when offered by the pupils or their parents. That they be always associated in keeping schools...*
>
> *That* **none of the Brothers ambition the priesthood or aspire to ecclesiastical Orders.**
>
> *That the vows of the Brothers be those of chastity, poverty, obedience and stability in the said Institute and also of teaching the poor gratuitously with this understanding... that the Roman Pontiff... can absolve these same Brothers from their simple vows...*
>
> *That the Brothers Directors of the particular houses govern them for three years only, unless for good reasons, it seems more suitable to the Superior General... and his Assistants to shorten or prolong this period...*
>
> *That the General Chapters... be held every ten years...*
>
> *That the Visitors chosen by the Superior General... make a visit of the houses each year... and that they make a report to the Superior General... on whatever may need reform in each house.*
>
> *That the Brothers not only teach the children reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic, but that they chiefly imbue their minds with the precepts of Christianity and of the Gospel... that they teach them how to say their morning and evening prayers and impress on their hearts the commandments of God, the laws of the Church and other things necessary for salvation...*
>
> *Wherefore we... and with the advice of our Venerable Brethren, the Cardinals... do, without prejudice to anyone... approve ... by our Apostolic authority, the Institute and its Rules and all that is contained in them... and We impart to them the force of Apostolic stability... Furthermore, it is Our will that henceforth, for all future ages, no one of the Brothers of this Institute, without the express consent of the Superiors General of the Institute, even under the*

pretext of joining a more severe order, may leave the said Institute, or return to the world but that he remain under the obedience of his Superiors, and not otherwise."[30]

The finalizing of the Rules took place then in 1725. The first profession of vows conformable to the Bull of Approbation occurred on 15th August, the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady. The Brothers' vows were legally received not by the Superior General who like all the Brothers gathered in Chapter was also professing vows for the first time in their totality, but by the Vicar-General of the Archbishop of Rouen, acting as representative of the Sovereign Pontiff. No decision relative to school matters was made on the occasion of this particular General Chapter.

It was not quite the same in 1734. The use of tobacco—the custom of the time was to take snuff—was considered incompatible with the vows of poverty and teaching gratuitously, and so was forbidden. It is quite clear that one of the reasons for the proscription was the example, unfortunately so seductive or suggestive, given to pupils by the use of tobacco.

At the Chapter of 1745, Article No. IX specifically states: "De La Salle's Syllabary will be used in the schools."

In 1777 the pedagogical training of the Brothers merited considerable reflection and the Chapter makes the following decision: "As soon as those Brothers, who display an aptitude for learning, have made perpetual profession of vows, they will be required to apply themselves solely to study for as long a period as shall be determined by the Brother Superior ... He will give them as tutors those teachers he ... considers suitable... Since **the sciences taught in boarding schools.**(St. Yon, Marseilles, Mirepoix, Saint-Die, Montpellier, Saint-Omer, Montargis, Angers, Mareville near Nancy) such as mathematics and drawing are regarded as advantageous to the Institute, the teachers will be sent to learn such in houses where these subjects are taught."

In Chapter articles concerned with the novitiate, pedagogy was not neglected. It was important to ensure that postulants who were future teachers do not have "a bearing that is in any way strained, affected or artificial" but "they need to accustom themselves to a deportment that is natural, unaffected, assured and frank." Granted the inclination novices might have to manual work, it was fitting that they be instructed in "some of the duties and practices of their state in life, in the ways of educating and teaching youth, and in fulfilling well all the work... of the Society." However "the very great desire that some novices may have to engage in teaching must be restrained." The special case where a stay of two years was required in the novitiate house deserved consideration. If a gratuitous school is adjacent to the novitiate, then the novices in their second year might be employed with a view to **completing their formation.** "One day each week... the novices will be given at least an hour's lesson on Christian and religious politeness... To make these lessons practical, care should be taken to admonish or reprimand the novices in a kindly fashion where it is appropriate to the lesson."[31]

What claimed attention in the 1787 Chapter was the ongoing formation of Brothers engaged in the schools. Several decisions of a pedagogical nature were made:

> *"The Directors will consider as being one of the most important duties of their direction their assiduity in instructing the young Brothers and in forming them in the difficult art of educating youth. They shall spare no effort to maintain and perfect in these Brothers the early training they received during the novitiate. They will often see their work in order to be satisfied as to their application and progress... The young Brothers will be tested every three months by the Brother Director or by another... on the catechism and the other subjects they have to study... Brothers Directors will grant some time for those Brothers who need it for the study of the rules of grammar or the principles of arithmetic..."*

When the first edition of the Conduct of Christian Schools, was exhausted, and before the next impression there were to be deleted those prescriptions relative to "corporal punishment" which **the Chapter forbade the Brothers to use,** granted the disadvantages of this type of correction."

This 1787 Chapter was especially severe with regard to two serious impediments that marred Lasallian pedagogy. These were among those impediments which the Papal Bull left to the judgment of the Chapter as reasons for a Brother's dismissal: "Willful refusal to engage in teaching... and violence in the manner of dealing with students."

The ensuing Chapter in 1810, coincided with the restoration of the Lasallian Institute after its ruin in the Revolution.[32] None of the Chapter decisions was concerned with the least change from the pedagogical point of view. The 1811 edition of the Conduct of Schools contrary to the 1742 edition which barely differs from that of 1720[33] had benefited from projects developed by experienced Brothers ever since the 1777 and 1787 Chapters gave notice of their intention to proceed with some improvements. The edition (1811) therefore adopted what the Superior General and his Assistants considered most worthy of retention in the practices effectively used in Lasallian schools about 1787.

The 1811 Edition has added the following text [extrapolated from manuscripts 39 and 40 in the F.S.C. Archives in Rome] from the 1720 edition: "Considerations a Brother must make about his state of life" and "the means he should employ to teach well." In his Preface to this same edition, the Superior General, Brother Gerbaud writes:

> *"It was suggested we should correct the somewhat archaic style of the text, but influenced by a fear of weakening its strength, and the smoothness of its prose, its wisdom and noble simplicity, we*

have respected its turn of phrase and so changed nothing therein. If we have added a few fragmentary passages gathered from some old notebooks discovered in our Archives... it was only after taking the advice of those experienced Assistants whom you yourselves in your wisdom gave us. With a view to bringing our educational strategies into line with the gentle nature of present day customs, we have suppressed or changed all that relates to corporal punishment, *and replaced (these sanctions) with... a good points system, contracts, rewards,... (or) with a system of bad points, privations and impositions."*[34]

Several phrases, which are not found in the 1720 and 1742 editions merit explanation since they refer to alternatives to corporal or degrading punishment.

By good points and contracts are to be understood what later editions will classify as "privileges." They are really "stamps on paper" to serve as "money" in view of giving rewards. There are stamps of "one point," of five, ten, fifteen and twenty points which allow for gradation in the value of the action and its consequent reward. Some are distributed not only for the quality of answers to questions but even more for pupils who "are on best behavior in the event of a teacher's absence" and for "those who follow instructions most carefully." Each month these points are exchanged for holy cards, books, and other useful articles. The points can also help in the remission of a punishment or an imposition. These chastisements require that a pupil do extra work which can be "five lines" to be learned by rote or written out. Depending on the gravity of the fault or the degree of negligence the teacher can give more than one imposition. As for penances they can require that a pupil be relieved of a responsibility he has been given, that a pupil who comes late for class remain standing near the door for a short period of time, that a pupil be required to copy out a second time a lesson he has not learned... Another form of penance likewise is to have a pupil surrender some of his points.

The 1811 edition of "The Management of Christian Schools" continues:

"We dare to expect that our dear Brothers will be in a position to curtail all kinds of corporal punishment when use is made of these new means (of encouragement) as efficacious as they are acceptable to a generous spirit... And so we are dispensing with the large cane... replacing it with a simple strip of leather about a foot long and an inch wide and split at one end into two equal parts. We hope that with divine assistance and the meekness of our dearly beloved confreres, use will not be made of it except when absolutely necessary and then only to give one slap on the hand without it ever being permitted for use in any other way."

For the first time, this 1811 edition included the "third part of the Conduct of schools" under the heading. "The Conduct of the Formators of young teachers and of School Inspectors"—the essential directives of which were already known from the manuscript dated 1706.[35]

With this 1811 edition we are in contact with the last witnesses of what school life was really like in the closing years of the 18th century. From then on a new world opens up. To follow the evolution of Lasallian pedagogy over the next two centuries and in more than eighty countries would require another volume.

Not satisfied merely with setting up a form of education in the shape of a religious congregation, La Salle devoted himself to the task of developing competency among the entire group of teachers whom he was preparing for their dedicated service to schools for the masses.

NOTES

1. Blain, *op. cit.*, in CL 7, p. 169.
2. *Positio Roland*, pp. 247-250. The first three biographers of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle, Bernard, Maillefer and Blain made no mention of John Roland, cf. CL 9 *Index cumulatif.*
3. Yves Poutet, *Charles Démia*, CL 56, pp. 38-43.
4. Details on the institutions of that time are in Y. Poutet, *Le xvii^e siècle et les origines lasalliennes*, Volume II, pp. 1-261.
5. *Règles communes*, ch 7 § 12, and *Mémoire sur l'habit*, CL 5 p. 260 § 38.
6. Blain, *op. cit.*, Volume *of CL 7, p. 170.*
7. *Ibid.*, Volume II of CL 8, p. 174ff.
8. J.-B. de La Salle, *Lettrees*, Critical edition, p. 258.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 221.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 253.
11. *Règles communes*, chapters 7, 8, 9. In CL 25.
12. *Ibid.*, chapter 12.
13. *Ibid.*, chapter 25.
14. *Ibid.*, chapters 28 and 29.
15. *Conduite des écoles*, edited by Brother Anselm, pp. 229-287.
16. CL 24, p. 249.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 250-255.
18. *Ibid.*, pp 256-262.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 264-272.
20. *Ibid., pp. 273-290.*
21. *Lettres du Roi*, on parchment, sealed with the great wax seal. As distinct from Lettres de Cachet addressed to particular individuals, these Lettres du Roi are directed to "all those present and to come" and thus constitute "patents."
22. G. Rigault, *op. cit.*, Volume I, p. 472.

23. Brother Lucard, *Annales de l'Institut des Frères des écoles chrétiennes*, 1883 edition, Volume I, p. 472.
24. J.-B. de La Salle, *Lettres*, critical edition, p. 135.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
27. Brother Lucard, *Annales*, Volume I, p. 484.
28. *Observations de la municipalité de Rouen au Procureur du Roi*, A.M. de Rouen, March 1736, quoted in Lucard, *Annales*, Volume I, p.441. Quite contrary to the sarcasm of Voltaire who reads "Yontains" as "ignorantins" in his poem "Grands chapeaux" meaning thereby ignorant teachers, the Intendant (Governor) of Guyenne makes a request to the local Superior of the Brothers residing at Toulouse for "several of those *wise* Ignorantins" in the sense of "conquerors of ignorance," Archives of F.S.C. at Talence, Bordeaux Dossier.
29. Brother Lucard, *Annales*, Volume I, pp. 450ff.
30. Brother Lucard, *Annales*, Volume I, pp.450-455. The special edition of the Bull of Approbation initiated by Brother Irlide, Superior General, 15th October 1880 remedies certain traditions that left "a few things to be desired."
31. *General Chapters of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*. Paris, 1902.
32. *Ibid.* p.64
33. In 1720, it is a duodecimo. In 1742, it is in Octavo. Cf. CL *Introduction*.
34. *Conduite des écoles*, edited by Brother Anselms, p. 40.
35. CL 24, *at the end*.

Chapter 2

INITIAL FORMATION OF THE TEACHERS

Since La Salle's idea of anthropology was both unified and Christian, he was very aware of the interaction between soul and body in each individual. His concept of human nature destined for the Beatific Vision affected his pedagogy: it was the basis for an unusual coherence between sacred and secular. The special relationship which can grow between teacher and student makes it necessary for teachers to be of the highest caliber. The pedagogue teaches, counsels and directs; but to be truly an educator, he must be also an exemplar: to be a Christian educator, his behavior must be that of a Christian. From this perspective, a third dimension–the social dimension–enters into school life. This comprises the ability of the staff to work together, how they react with parents, the interaction of students with each other, as well as that between teachers and students.

In practice, this indicated three lines of force which characterize the Lasallian spirit expressed in *The Common Rule of the Brothers*: **the spirit of faith** which unifies sacred and secular, **the spirit of zeal** which shows itself in relations with students and parents, and **the spirit of community** which binds the teachers to each other and causes them to think of their classes as intimate communities in which **responsibility is shared with the students.**

Through the spirit of faith, we consider the world as we see it as the work of God. Every human action is part of God's creative work: as Christ said, "My father is working all the time, and so do I." So creation did not stop after the beginning of the world. To neglect the secular in dealing with God would distort Lasallian pedagogy, although from a methodological viewpoint, the two facets can be analyzed separately.

The daily prayers which La Salle composed for the use of the teachers, noted that God gives each one "life, movement and being," and every half hour during class time, the invitation "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God" provided the climate for a close relationship with Him from whom all existence comes.[1]

So, Lasallian teacher training tried to produce both exceptional Christians and competent teachers who could induce their pupils to follow their good example. For towns, where it was possible for them to live in community since the schools had several classes, La Salle founded the congregation of *Brothers of the Christian Schools*, with a religious and pedagogical formation which he regarded as a novitiate. For the *Country Teachers*, who normally operated in one-teacher schools, and supplied the extra function of back-up to the parish priests, he planned a "Teachers' College" which accepted priests or clerical students as well as laymen.

In both cases, one compulsory course was a training period in a well-run school. This was supervised by the *Formator of New Teachers*, who could be the Director of the School or a Brother Inspector.

The formation for the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* hardly differed from that given to the **Teacher Trainees** being prepared for country schools as far as pedagogy was concerned. Reading, writing, arithmetic, catechism, spelling, politeness, as well as class organization, how to get sufficient silence to make study possible, or engendering habits of Christian piety in the children were almost the same for both.

All were given specialized texts, not necessarily printed, as the *Management of Schools* with a Third Section on the Inspector of Schools, was kept in manuscript form and dictated to the future teachers during their formation. These would use a building near a school where pupil teachers tried their hand at putting into practice the teaching methods studied elsewhere.

The future teachers would soon take their turn in a class of the nearby school under the critical but kindly eye of the class teacher whose place he took.

On the other hand, those aspiring to share **the Brothers' life** first made a novitiate which it was later decided would last one year. It did not conclude with the taking of vows which would attach them to the Lasallian community, as La Salle wanted each to take at least a year to see at first hand what life in the schoolroom was like. Before making a decision on a definitive engagement, it was necessary for them to experience how well they could succeed in school. Only after one or more years' trial in class could they make vows—temporary until they were 25—then, should the young Brother want to, he could bind himself to the congregation with perpetual vows.

The *Rule* of 1726, which treated the question of vows in accordance with the recently arrived Bull of Approbation, confirmed this custom of integrating religious and professional life:

> *"No Brother may make vows... if he has been less than two years in the Institute, and unless he has made a Novitiate and spent* one year in the classroom."[2]

Each one aspiring to the life of a teaching religious had to "test himself," that is, make sure for himself that he felt he was called both to a religious life devoted to teaching the poor, and had been given the natural talents to do this work.

This dual system of **Novitiate** for the Brothers and **Teacher Training College** for laymen and clerics came about only gradually. When Adrian Nyel came to Rheims in 1679, La Salle had scarcely any experience with parochial schools. He really only tried to assist the Sisters of the Child Jesus in order to carry out Nicholas Roland's last wishes. So it was Adrian Nyel, who had been for about twenty years in charge of the teachers in the schools run by the Poor Committee and the General Hospital in Rouen, who recruited and trained the first teachers in Rheims. The first

teachers quickly became discouraged because of the lack of initial motivation to involve themselves in a life of poverty in community until they died. Very quickly, those who left were replaced by young men who wanted to give their lives entirely to God, and to serve Him in gratuitous schools for the poor. La Salle began their training in the progressive and continuous way which is discussed in the following.

He next organized a Center where they could be prepared for their work. Soon they were joined by other young men who had done classical studies as part of the Master of Arts degree. Parish priests in the region began asking him to train teachers for their country schools. So by about 1685, the former canon had developed two courses of training. He had resigned his canonry to be free to organize a novitiate for those who were to become Brothers of the Christian Schools, and had set up a College for training lay or clerical teachers for running country schools while assisting the parish priests as secretaries, registrars or sacristans.

1. The Brothers' Novitiate

When La Salle died in 1719, the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* had approval from neither King, Bishops, nor Pope. They were an experimental community under the more or less benign eye–depending on the time and the place– of the civil and religious authorities.

So the word "novitiate" is not used with the canonical meaning it has today. It was a center for both teacher training and for initiation into the religious life. Its duration varied because it had to be adapted to a wide variety of the previous education of each candidate. It could be brief, as it was continued later as continuing formation in the schools and communities.

General directives were just as much for the secular teachers trained by the Brothers as for themselves. All shared the same basic convictions:

> *"The purpose of this Institute (that of the Brothers) is to give Christian education to children; for this reason they conduct schools so that the children, being under the teachers' care from morning until evening, can be taught to live well, the teachers instructing them in the mysteries of our holy religion, inspiring them with Christian sentiments, and so giving them an education suited to their needs."* (Cahiers Lasalliens 25, p 16)

The social importance of the school as a source of customs and manners which were not just polite, but unselfishly sought the good of all, came, not by way of compulsion, but by reasonableness, to the future teachers; for La Salle wrote in regard to those who live from day to day, unable to see to it that their children are shown the right way to live:

> *"All [their] problems usually come... from the fact that they have been left to their own devices and very* **badly brought up from childhood,** *something which it is almost impossible to remedy at a more mature age, since the bad habits they have formed can only be overcome with great difficulty, and can very rarely be completely cured, however hard one may try.... Now, as the main result intended by the establishment of Christian schools is to prevent these problems occurring and to thwart their unfortunate consequences, one can easily realize their importance and necessity."* (Cahiers Lasalliens 25, p 17)

In the *Common Rule* of 1705, one chapter is entitled "The Novitiate House." Although it was really a novitiate preparing for an education in a true form of religious life, following episcopal approbation for the houses of formation at Vaugirard near Paris, and Saint Yon near Rouen, the initial formation for the Brothers was at first of variable duration. This was because of the wide range of experience among those who applied to join. It was fixed only later through a decision of the community to conform to the regulation of the Council of Trent, which set a minimum of one year for the novitiate of religious orders.[3] During La Salle's lifetime, preparation for the classroom was not separated from initiation into religious life. When the priests of Saint Sulpice asked him to train a teacher for the Sulpician school in Montreal (Canada), he told them he would need six months to prepare him., Since there were "serving brothers" working in the kitchen and doing maintenance work in the schools and communities, occasionally replacing a sick brother in class, the training of the teaching Brothers needed more time, as reading Latin, writing, and knowledge of dogma were often lacking when they joined the novitiate.

The Brother Director of the novitiate community gave a conference in the morning on "the work done in the Institute." Besides studying catechism and memorizing the Gospels, which had later to be recited, the novices spent an hour and a half in the afternoon studying "a Latin or French book, or hand-written letters." Each evening, a half hour was spent in a formation lesson. Each future teacher in turn would give a lesson as teacher to his fellow novices as he would to pupils. Later, everyone criticized his effort and the Director added his comments. Secular subjects as well as catechism and training in prayer were all grist for the mill. These, and many other activities aimed at forming the religious, helped produce balanced personalities in control of their own destiny, who could combine a sacred purpose with a secular task. A glance at the daily timetable may help us gauge their relative importance.

- Rising, 4:30 am. At 5 o'clock "a quarter of an hour for vocal prayers" then mental prayer until 6. Matins and Lauds were said.
- About 7 o'clock, "the novices learn by heart the passage from the New Testament set by the Director." They did this walking in the garden, or, if it

was raining or too cold, inside. When each had learned what he had been given, he recited it to the Director of Novices.

- At 8 o'clock, the Litany of the Holy Child Jesus was said, with Prime and Terce of the office of the Most Blessed Virgin.
- At half past eight, Mass. One or two novices received Communion for the intention of the community, each one having his day in the week allotted by the Director. They only went to Communion on Thursday if this was the day allotted to them, although the Brothers in schools normally communicated on Thursdays and Sundays.[4]
- After Mass, the *Rules for School* was read during breakfast. Then, the novices went back to the chapel to say Sext. Afterwards, each read in a spiritual book.
- From half past ten until eleven, meditation was made on what had been read or else on a subject set by the Director, a saint's special virtue, or a passage of Holy Scripture.
- At eleven o'clock, some novices gave an account of how they had made their mental prayer, and what practical lessons they had drawn from it.[5] During this time, the Director added to some comments on meditation and the virtues "which novices need," a discourse on **the work** of the school.
- Particular Examen at half past eleven, then "the Accusation," followed by lunch. The "Particular Examen" was made by each one asking himself which defect he was trying to eradicate, and what he was doing, or wanted to do about it for the rest of the day in order to make his conduct better. As for the "*coulpe,*" La Salle never used this word, calling it the "Accusation." This consisted in publicly admitting defects or negligences against an article of the *Common Rule.* It was quite different from confession. It was intended to make up for the bad example given, while being at the same time a means of curing the bad habit. It did not need to be related to the particular examen which could concern itself with private details of one's conduct; nor to the evening examination of conscience which could be used, if it was so desired, to prepare for a future confession.

The meal which followed did not generally last more than half an hour. It was taken in silence because the *Common Rule*, which the novices were learning to live by, specified in 1705 that a passage from the New Testament (only the *Gospels* and the *Acts of the Apostles*) should be read, then an abridged **Life of a Saint** and finally from a book of piety. *The Practices of the Daily Timetable*, doubtless antedating 1705 although the extant copy is dated 1713, details how this should be done:

> *"The reading is not done by just one Brother, but all the Brothers take turns, standing bare-headed (that is, taking off their calottes [a small skull-cap Translator's note), as much as is indicated by*

> *the Director, who himself reads first if there are fewer than six Brothers. At the end of the meal... when all have finished eating, some lines from the first three books of the Imitation of Christ are read, starting it again when these books are finished. While the Imitation is being read, the crumbs are removed from the table, grace is said, and finally all go to the Oratory reciting in two choirs as they go the Psalm Ecce quam bonum et quam etc. On arrival, the Litany of the Passion is said to prepare for recreation, by thinking on the sufferings of Jesus Christ, so that this time will be spent wisely and modestly. After the Litany, the Director reads a motto which may enable the Brothers to take their recreation in a holy manner."*[6]

We might ask why the fourth book of the *Imitation* was not read at midday. This was because it was about the Eucharist; and it was read in "houses connected with schools" from 6 o'clock to quarter past six on Thursdays and Sundays, the usual Communion days, although each one, with the advice of his confessor was free to communicate more often or less often. In the novitiate, the Office of Our Lady was said on those days at that time. The Psalm "Ecce quam bonum" sings of the joy of living in community to serve God.

Recreation was merely conversation among the Brothers. Here the door was open for contradicting, irony, scandalmongering, and vanity; but the prayer of compassion for the redemptive sufferings of Christ which preceded this exercise placed such opportunities in a different perspective. The novices in particular were urged to change from a worldly pattern of conversation to a religious one.

The *Collection* required them to "get into the habit of speaking of God, and speaking well of him", to occupy themselves with "things concerned with his service" and therefore with **the school** and how to do this properly. There was the opportunity to learn how to talk about what was read in the refectory, "of the life of Jesus Christ"... in all the events of his life, of his childhood and "the ways of spreading this devotion among children"... There was a place too, for the pedagogical area: qualities they had noticed in teaching brothers who had died; how daily duties could be done well thanks to the spirit of faith, which was "the spirit of the Institute" and allowed them to be done in the sight of God and for his glory. Other topics were: virtues suitable for teachers, such as patience, gentleness, restraint; faults to be avoided in school such as neglect, levity, badly prepared catechism lessons, lack of piety, severity, over-familiarity, softness.[7] We can see how helpful in forming the novices these daily recreations led by the Brother Director would have been when he replied to the youngsters' questions with axioms, and tales from his own experiences as a teacher, and snippets from his reading. The mid-day recreation lasted three quarters of an hour.

At one o'clock the novices said the *Litany of Saint Joseph*, the patron of the Institute, then the special rosary of the *Brothers of the Christian Schools*. This was

not exactly the same as that of Saint Bridget, nor was it just a part of the Dominican rosary. It started with the Creed, then *Our Father* and three *Hail Marys* followed by the *Glory be*... Six decade of *Hail Marys* followed, each preceded by an *Our Father* and followed by a *Glory be*.

By this time, it was half past one. The novices had an hour and a half to use learning from "a book in Latin or French, or handwritten letters." "Latin" here meant the *Psalter,* which was the only book in Latin mentioned in the *Conduct of schools* for teaching the students to read Latin. This was not the *Little Office of Our Lady*, but the real *Psalter* in its entirety, with its broader vocabulary and which was harder to learn by heart. The "French" books were the *Duties of a Christian* in continuous prose treatises, other text books, and the *Rules of Politeness and Christian Manners*. This time could also be used when necessary "in the garden, or sweeping and cleaning the house."

At three o'clock, None, Vespers and Compline of Our Lady's Office were said. Then followed an hour and a half for the study of catechism. This was probably the *Duties of a Christian* in question and answer form, then *Exterior Worship, the Third Part of the Duties of a Christian.* There was no reason why novices who were more advanced in religious knowledge should not study the *Duties in continuous treatises* or some more profound text. It is clear, for example, that Brother Bartholomew, who entered the novitiate after studying philosophy at the Jesuit College of Douay, and had begun a theological course with a view to ordination, used other books.[8] Nevertheless, in order to prepare themselves directly for their work, all the novices began by studying the elementary book they would later on have to teach and explain to their pupils.

At half past four, Brother Director examined the catechism that had been studied, and asked questions to elicit explanations which would show that each had clearly understood what he had learned.

At five o'clock there was three quarters of an hour for private spiritual reading, the Director selecting the book for each according to his needs.

At 5:45, some novices were asked about what they had read. Their answers led to some advice on how to profit from spiritual reading. Two pages of *The Collection*, of which the novices had a copy of the 1711 edition, made these practical points: Savor what you read, stop now and then to think about how you would put the advice given into action, etc.[9]

At six o'clock a bell was rung for mental prayer which lasted until 6:30.

At six thirty, the **Accusation** again; then supper, and recreation until eight o'clock. During supper, both before and after 1705, the readings prescribed for all communities were: 1° The *Epistles* then the *Apocalypse*, 2° "a chapter of *Bible History,*" using the book by Royaumont, 3° A pious book, 4° A verse from *The Imitation of Christ*, when everyone had finished eating.

At eight o'clock, "one novice will be designated to give a catechism *or a school lesson* to teach [him] how to do it properly."[10] This was when the Director of Novices explained clearly how to prepare a catechism lesson as set out in the *Management of Schools*.

At half past eight, there was evening prayer before retiring. All the lights in the house were put out at quarter past nine and the *great silence* was kept until meditation time the next day.

On *Sundays*, the novices made the *Advertisement of defects* from about half past one until three o'clock. Each novice in turn knelt down, and asked his Brothers to tell him his faults, using a formula taken from the Brothers' *Exercises of Piety*. It was not a question of "sins" but exterior faults against the rules and customs. The purpose of the exercise was for them to help each other correct their defects, which would often be things which would tell against them later as teachers and against their apostolate with children. The Director would intervene when necessary in the cause of charity and discretion. This was evidently formative; so the "victim" thanked his colleagues with another formula from the *Exercises*.

At six o'clock, instead of meditation which had been made at quarter past five, the Superior of the Institute, that is, John-Baptist de La Salle, when he was present, or in his absence the Director, gave "a talk on mental prayer or some points of the Rule, or on things about the work of the institute" that is, the school.

On school holidays, the novitiate went on much the same as other days. However, at about one o'clock–having said the Litany of Saint Joseph as well as None, Vespers and Compline of Our Lady's Office–the novices would not take a walk like the other Brothers, but would have free time "in the house under the eye of their Director."[11] So their life was very similar to that of cloistered religious; in fact, they compared it to a small-scale Trappist monastery.

Even in the novitiate, however, where the main concern was formation for the religious life, preparation for their apostolic and professional life as Christian educators occupied about three hours a day; not counting the conversations during the two daily recreations of about three quarters of an hour each, and the prayers and examens which did not omit the virtues necessary for every Christian teacher. The spirit of faith and community life enlivened and strengthened the Brother's zeal for teaching.

"Trained in the ways of the school" even during their novitiate, the young Brothers were formed as were the teachers for country schools following the *Rule for the Formator of New Teachers*, which we tackle in the next paragraph. For a start, the novices learned how to act in class on all occasions. Before they ever got near real pupils, they were told "how to go into a class" with a "serious, thoughtful manner, head up and looking steadily at the scholars" as though they had had "thirty years' experience." They had to practice beforehand the various things they would do in class; kneeling, saluting the crucifix, sitting in the teacher's chair solemnly and wisely. They would practice with a confrere acting as a student accosting him cheekily, and without speaking, and getting him to kneel down as he did so himself.[12]

2. The Training College for Country Teachers

In his *Memoir on the Habit*, La Salle mentioned what he called, for want of a better term, a "Teachers' College ":

> *"There, we try... to train schoolteachers for the country regions, in a house which is separate from that of the Community (of Brothers), which we call the College. Those being trained there only stay for* **a few years** *until they are completely trained, as much in piety as in their employment. Their clothes are no different from those usually worn, other than that their outfit is black or a dark brown, and the only thing to differentiate them from other lay people is the rabat and their rather short hair. They are taught there to sing, read and write perfectly, and are given free board and lodging and instruction. They are later sent to a town or village to do* **clerical work** *there [i.e. assist the parish priest. Translator's note.]. Once they get a position, they have no further connection with the community (of Brothers) except that of goodwill. They can, however, come back to make a retreat."*[13]

Some words here may need to be explained. The rabat was not just for priests or certain religious, but in those days it was worn like the present-day necktie. In Molière's the *Bourgeois gentilhomme,* M. Jourdain uses Plutarch's works to "press his rabats" after they were washed. The rabat is what the student teachers had to wear, to make their mode of dress and haircut sufficiently humble, as befitted the evangelical character of their work. Coquetry was deemed to be out of place for Christian educators in schools for the poor.

The word "sing" signifies the ability to teach the popular tunes used for most of the spiritual canticles sung at the end of most catechism lessons, as the students had only the lyrics. It also applies to plain chant or Gregorian chant, as we can see from the program of the Teachers' College at Saint Denis near Paris from Easter of 1709. Furetière considers "**Plain Chant**" as "the ordinary chant of the choir in churches where the choristers sing in unison," while for Richelet it consists in "knowing and recognizing the notes so as to be able to intone them," combining "the pitch of the notes and words which are to be sung" (*Dictionaries*) As the *Lasallian Vocabulary* in six volumes, does not have any reference at all to "**plain chant**," the term unmentioned in the *Conduct for the Brothers* as in all other works of the Founder, was used only in the College for Country Teachers, because the Brothers were not allowed to perform any office in church "other than to serve low Mass" (*Common Rule*). Now, in 1709, an agreement with Poullard des Places, founder of the *Holy Spirit Fathers*, allowed him or one of his followers to help train pupil teachers at Saint Denis who were destined to help parish priests in rural areas. An exemption from having to billet troops, signed by Duke du Maine "by order of

the King," after a helpful intervention by Cardinal de Noailles, actually mentions that plain chant was to be taught "by one of the three Brothers," which was why the exemption was granted, as this constituted an ecclesiastical occupation. So the Teachers' College had more on its syllabus than the Brothers' training program in the area of sacerdotal liturgy, and a knowledge of Latin which was not restricted to reading only, and in that of sacred music. Blain's biography has this to say on the point:

> *"Three young boys (admitted) to (be) trained as Country Schoolmasters... went in soutane on Sundays and feasts to their parish of Saint Marcel."*[14]

As for the length of stay at the College, it only lasted some years for young people who arrived without education. We know, for example, the case of Anthony Forget, sent by the Paris Sulpicians to be trained as a teacher for their school at Montreal in Canada. This was in 1701. It only took six months to get him ready for his work. From there he later wrote to the Sulpician Superior asking him to send the books "by M. de La Salle," as well as permission to use his methods.[15]

In speaking of the College for Country Teachers, Blain, La Salle's first biographer in print, declares: "All the requirements of good Christian living had their set place in the timetable" : morning and evening prayers, daily Mass, spiritual reading, religious studies and mental prayer.

In this regard, La Salle, for whom the **employment** of Christian teaching meant the profession, while the **state** of being a brother referred to the religious dimension, had no hesitation in writing: "The more you concentrate on prayer, the better you will succeed in your employment."[16] Besides secular teaching, this 'employment' required one equally to watch over the behavior of the child as a human being, but even more, for a Christian, as a child of God. La Salle stresses this in his ***Meditations***:

> *"You have an* **employment** *where you must resist, not just heretics, but the susceptible feelings of children, which can incline them strongly to evil. You will not succeed in this by natural means, but through the Spirit of God and the fullness of his grace, which you can draw down on your efforts only by your ardent prayer. Be very faithful to this, so that , enlightened by him... you will draw them away from all the Devil's suggestions."*[17]
>
> *"Your employment during the day does not prevent you from leading a life of recollection. Love it and protect it willingly, following the example of [Saint Gregory Nazianzen] who achieved holiness in this way. It will help you greatly to reach the perfection of your state and assist your students to become pious. But if you do not savor it, and try only half-heartedly to be prayerful, you*

will not have the unction you need to inspire them with a Christian spirit."[18]

"Your obligation to earn grace, not just for yourself but for others too; and to endeavor to touch hearts, should make you apply yourself as much as possible to mental prayer... Try to do everything in a spirit of prayer: it is one of the best ways to make them holy."[19]

"The more you really work at your mental prayer for the good of the souls entrusted to you, the more facility God will give you to touch their hearts."[20]

"Just as this saint (the Apostle Bartholomew) knew there is no success for apostolic endeavors without God's special help" he was "devoted to prayer... You have the advantage of sharing in the work of the Apostles by teaching catechism every day to the ones you look after, and by teaching them the Gospel maxims . However, your work will not have much effect unless you are a man of prayer whose words flow with a holy unction which enhances their effect by sinking deep into their hearts."[21]

To round off this section, it might be apt to add here what the *Memoir* on the habit says about "youths of fourteen or more" who show interest in later joining the Brothers:

"They are formed to mental prayer and other devotional works. They are instructed in all the catechism material, and are taught to read and write perfectly."[22]

This teacher training takes on a new dimension when the Brothers do practice teaching.

3. Practice Teaching

The method of teacher training for country schools was hardly any different at Saint Denis from what has just been described for the parish of Saint Hippolytus in Paris. It comprised practice teaching *in the school nearby* as the biographer Blain tells us:

"School (= classes) was held in the same house as the Teachers' College. One of the two classes was looked after by the second Brother, the other by one of the College students (= student teachers) under the eye of his supervisor. All the young people took their turn at this for practice and theory of the way to teach school effectively."[23]

At Saint Hippolytus, Brother Nicholas Vuyart was the Director, having done seminary studies before deciding to join La Salle's community. As a result, he was well able to take the plain chant classes. Unfortunately, he left in around 1704 or 1705, followed by the departure of the Director of the Saint Denis Teachers' College about 1709. This spelled the end of these centers of pedagogical training.

So, when we look at *The Brothers of the Christian Schools,* the same formation for the teacher trainees was followed, with regards to the pedagogical methods given to help them in their first years of classroom management.

Besides the Director of the Community, there was also an *Inspector of Schools* when there were several schools in the same town. These and the *Formator for New Teachers* had directories at their disposal to assist in this onerous task. The Duty Statement for the *Inspector of Schools* made up P*art 3* of the *Management of Schools of 1706*, but was not included in the 1720 edition because it was not of concern to all the Brothers. In the same way, the *Rule for the Formator of New Teachers,* a manuscript in the archives of Vaucluse (Avignon) classified as H1, was not printed until 1811. It is true, however, that the Preface of 1720, which hardly differs from that of 1706, states: "This conduct was collected and arranged (by the late M. de La Salle) only after many discussions... between him and the Brothers. It goes on:

> *"Part 3 deals first with the duties of The Inspector of Schools, then... those of the Formator of New Teachers, and thirdly of the characteristics... of teachers, and fourthly of how the students should behave."*[24]

"The training of New teachers is needed":

1. To make the new teachers or Brothers appreciate their employment "by making their work pleasant and painless."
2. To make "the pupils love school, and persuade their parents into sending them readily."
3. To "make sure the students are taught well," thus making the Inspector's work easier.
4. To save teachers and Brothers "from most of the problems they meet when they start" and to save "pupils from punishment."

As far as the Brothers are concerned, these justifications will help preserve the good reputation of the Institute as well as maintain their own vision of their goal, which is to manage the school well.[25]

In contrast to Charles Démia, who felt that the "characteristics needed by a teacher are not to be found in every type of person,"[26] the *Conduct for Formators* is less discriminating:

> *"Apart from a very small number of people who are not well disposed... so that they could not be entrusted with the first steps*

in education for children,, we can say everyone else could do this **if they wanted to** *and if someone* **took the trouble to train them.**"[27]

Some of the things that can be done to encourage new teachers are: give him the expectation that he will succeed if he follows the guidance given him; let him see that the intention is not to spy on him, but to help him; let him adapt himself to the students' various temperaments so as not to turn them off; give the less-gifted ones enough time to improve; instead of pouncing on faults, show them what to do; avoid being either too finicky or too lax; spur on those who need it, and steady the others.

The proud ones should not be over-praised for their success, and the shy should be praised even for modest successes. Advice should be given individually outside of class time. But the Formator can interrupt the class as long as he does not make the pupils think he is fixing up something the student teacher did not know how to do properly, but is rather adding to what has just been said and agreeing with it.

The second article of the same (first) chapter deals with "the love of teaching" the Formator should encourage among the new teachers so that they will get a taste for it. In class, their work parallels "that of Jesus Christ" who told the Apostles to "let the little children come to him." It is likewise related to the work of the guardian angels in their unremitting vigilance. In a Christian school, the children, thanks to their teachers, learn the Christian way of living, a measure of their "happiness in this world and the next." *In loco parentis*, the Christian Teacher has an important part to play by his secular and religious education, in preparing citizens for heaven, for the church and the state.

Article 3 tells us how the Formator should behave. If he wants to give advice to a student teacher while the pupils are present, he should speak softly and briefly; and not more than four or five times during a lesson. It is good to give the student teacher an opportunity to observe the lessons of the regular class teacher every second day. The Formator will make sure the new teacher is familiar with the signs used to avoid unnecessary talk during lessons as set out in the *Conduct of Schools*. He will make it a point to "put a signal [i.e. a small clicking instrument for giving standard directions .Translator's note,] in his hand" and show him how to use it before taking him into class. He will give him the opportunity to ask for help where he finds trouble or is not sure what to do.

Before catechism lessons the Formator will make sure that the student teacher has prepared carefully so that the latter's language is suited to the pupils' understanding. In the same way he will watch for perfect enunciation during reading lessons. He will be sure to take notes on the good and bad points he has noticed, in order to be able to speak about them to the student teacher after the lesson, and to remind him of them at a later date before the student teacher goes into the classroom unsupervised.

In order not to have to interrupt the lessons, the Formator will arrange some hand signals with the new teacher so that he will know what to do when he forgets or is not sure: to punish if he should, and in what way; to remain at his place or move between the desks.

"Before you can judge the lack of facility a young Brother has for doing his work properly, he must be given time to try himself out at it; he should be given suitable advice; and finally he must have been able to observe **good teachers in action**, and have been tried in one or two **less troublesome** classes."[28]

It may be opportune to take note here of a letter dated 6th February 1711 in which La Salle was quite prepared to postpone the novitiate of a young lad who, while only a postulant, began teacher training in Paris, then continued it at Rheims. So Brother Fabian, "with the little brother from Mende" (Robert Esbrayat, born at Mende in 1694) was sent from Paris to Rheims in February 1711 "to take Brother Placide's place," the latter being transferred from Rheims to Guise. The reason given for this extension of the postulancy by a further stint in the classroom: "In two or three years, he will be better able to profit from the novitiate than he is now, and he will keep his class under control." In the actual event, as from the middle of September during the term holidays, Robert Esbrayat was back in Paris for the novitiate, being given the name of Brother Benedict.[29] This shows us that sometimes La Salle began the formation of future Brothers, not with the novitiate, but by a time in class in a community, under the guidance of a Director of formation for teachers. He, in this way, also allowed young people to gain the maturity they needed for an informed choice between the states of secular teacher and religious teacher. But he had also come to the conclusion that the psychological maturity of an aspirant to the life of a teaching religious would be more quickly achieved by an interval in community with pupils to look after. In Brother Benedict's case, the projected two more years of postulancy became a mere six or seven months.

Chapter 2 of the post-Revolution editions of the *Conduct* was headed: "Axioms with which the Formator is to fill the minds of the young teachers."

These included:

—"Pray, and call on God to help you." So the Formator reminds his student teacher that "unless the Lord build the house, those who would build it work in vain," for from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks; and no one can share with others what he does not have himself that is, love of God and zeal for his glory.[30] In this sense, the *Meditations for the Time of Retreat* by the founder of the Brothers, and the *Meditations* of Father Barré edited by Fr Giry for schoolteachers, are a fundamental formative tool.[31]

— To be really faithful to the *Conduct* or the *Rules for Schools* in order to achieve uniformity between the classes of different teachers and between different schools, without which every redeployment of teachers would adversely affect the children. Improvements in methods should be accepted by the Superior General after carefully controlled experimentation by the teachers of a region under the responsibility of their Director.

This *Rule for Schools* was read at breakfast every morning during the first months of the scholastic year, and was used by the Formator in conferences with his teachers. Before taking over a class, the teacher:

"Must have read carefully and thoughtfully this valuable book, which teaches him how to achieve success."

There were many advantages:

"With uniform teaching methods worked out and carefully selected, 1) the teachers become less tired, 2) the students' progress is easier and quicker, 3) changes in staff involving [minimum disruption] in educational principles and practice... 4) principles are better impressed on the pupils' minds..., 5) as their parents have learned the same things themselves in school, they can explain things to them and thus be a great help to the teachers."[32]

The Avignon manuscript of the *Rule for Formators* claims, in what we might consider a rather simplistic way, that all La Salle's thought could be easily remembered by every Formator. Formation, according to him, consisted of two points: 1) take from new teachers whatever they have that they should not have; 2) give them whatever they do not have, which they should."[33] In order to compare more easily the more complete early issues with those printed after the French Revolution, we will start with the qualities needed so that the Lasallian logic will be better respected in the Avignon manuscript: get rid of the faults before acquiring the good points.

How to develop the good qualities needed:

During his first days in a class, the teacher obtains **silence** by speaking as little as possible. He never allows a student to question him. When he needs to give instructions to the whole class, he first gives them to one pupil for him to repeat them to all his classmates. He would do this, for example, to explain what to do before going from school to Mass. If anyone disregards these instructions, he intervenes immediately, speaking to the recalcitrant one. By "No punishments during the first week," we mean there should not be any corporal punishment at this time, but only reprimands and light sanctions for the lack of respect for what has been enjoined or forbidden. One must not wait until several pupils have misbehaved before dealing with it: pick out "the naughtiest ones," a "bigger" one rather than a "small one."

Ascendancy is gained by insisting that the pupils speak to the teacher in a low, respectful voice; only after asking for permission, and standing up and taking off their hats. (It was in accord with politeness to wear a hat inside a building). Greater authority could also be obtained by always appearing well-disposed and even **softhearted,** speaking only with "gravity and deliberation," never laughing "even when there is cause to." Authority is maintained by seeing to it that all the pupils do well whatever they are asked to do: not mumbling, not leaving their place

without a reason, but also by avoiding the appearance of the teacher being rooted to the spot.

Firmness means being obeyed—punishing when necessary, for the teacher should never "bend before his students' pressure" but should overcome it by his resistance. **Rewards** can be helpful in achieving what is required, with the result that "the students always go home happy," and have no reason to "regale their parents" with reports that "could cause grief" or make them dissatisfied."[34]

Before putting a teacher in a class, the Formator or the Director tells him "what the pupils and their parents are like." Afterwards, the teacher will keep taking note of "the spirit, standards of behavior and inclinations of the children, so that he can relate to them in a suitable manner."[35]

The *Rule for Formators* in the Avignon manuscript ends with "the spirituality you should obtain for your students": piety, fear of the Lord, horror for sin and frequent reception of the sacraments. On this matter, the Formator should take special care to instruct the teachers well "how to speak to, and enthuse the children" during catechism, examination of conscience in the morning and evening prayer, explaining to them how "to give catechism lessons on good behavior two or three times a week," urging them to go to confession "every month" to receive Communion, "to pray to God each morning and evening" and often "during the day," to assist at Mass piously; and to speak to them from time to time "individually." He should see to it that teachers and pupils have suitable confessors."[36] The 1828 edition of the *Rule for Formators* goes into more detail, and concludes:

> *"It is by suggestion, by exhortation, and especially by example that he should teach his students to behave* **as they do themselves**, *in carrying out the precepts of the Gospel," because "the practices of a piety which is regimented will only last as long as the fear which produces them."*[37]

This stresses to the utmost the need to respect their pupils' freedom and their consciences.

These qualities needed by the new teacher are summed up in these words: "Authority by perseverance, firmness, reserve, outward seriousness, vigilance, self-mastery, good behavior, prudence, a pleasant expression, zeal, a voice pleasant, clear, and pitched to the students' understanding."[38] They confirm and clarify some of the "Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher," enumerated in the 1711 Lasallian *Collection* and repeated at the end of the 1720 (first) edition of the *Management of Schools*:

> *"Gravity, silence, humility, prudence, wisdom, patience, reserve, meekness, zeal, vigilance, piety and generosity."*[39]

These were not expanded until the end of the 18th century, when thanks to his pedagogical expertise, Brother Agathon, the Superior General, developed them,

not only from the writings of La Salle, but also from those of Charles Rollin, a professor at the Sorbonne.[40]

How to correct the most harmful faults:

"The basic faults that the Formator must correct" in the student teachers are explained at length in the Avignon manuscript. They are: using too many words; over-hastiness; light-headedness; hardheartedness; impatience; being over-impressed by certain personalities; a disregard for some pupils; weakness of will; a tendency to let the pupils dominate; familiarity; sluggishness; softness; favoritism; an appearance which is too recollected or dissipated; a dreamy air or too steady a stare.

How to cure each of these faults:

So the Formator will ask the student teacher to start by keeping absolute silence in class for a quarter of an hour, and then for longer and longer periods or for certain fixed amounts of time. He will point out to him either immediately or "after class' all the unnecessary words he used, and how he could have replaced them by just using his "signal." He will ask whether he took good note of how the students' silence improved in proportion to his own progress in this matter. He will suggest that when he feels like talking too much to "glance at the crucifix" or murmur "Jesus, Mary and Joseph" to remind him how he should act.

"While he should not be like a statue, not moving or doing anything all the time in school, he certainly should not be too busy or too active." The Formator will watch for this by keeping close to his student teacher, suggesting he remain at his place, first for a short time, then for longer. He will advise him not to move his head or feet around all the time, and not to approach the pupils' desks without a good reason; not to be fidgety while using his signal. He should point out to him every time he does not do this.

He will not allow the student teacher to behave frivolously, to giggle or do something silly which would make the pupils laugh.

He should convince them that correction should be rarely used, as "sternness and hardness do not produce good order in a school; but continual vigilance mixed with circumspection and sweetness." He will get them into the habit of always appearing "serene and full of goodness" and show them how to correct difficult children with moderation, never allowing themselves to touch them "with their hands, to push or pull them," shaking them around, nor "giving more than one cut of the strap at a time to the same pupil" and never more than "three strokes" after "a few moments' consideration" and raising "the heart to God." After school the teacher trainee will tell the Formator whether he had felt "moved to impatience" or had kept himself calm while administering correction. He would have been warned "never to throw anything at the pupils," to this end never having near him "a ruler or cane" nor anything else to hit them with.

"All new teachers must be urged to show" perfect charity to all, with even "more appearance of love and affection for the poor than for the rich." The Formator should even make them "take more trouble" over those who are less pleasant than the rest. For example, such ones should be asked to read, and to have their written work checked more often and be given more questions to answer during catechism. They should speak to them in a more friendly way, reward them when they have almost earned it, and encourage them to improve.

The Formator only points out "one or two faults at a time to the student teachers, especially if they are faint-hearted or easily discouraged." They need more consideration than do hardier souls. A few words of encouragement can do wonders for them.

To save the student teachers from a familiarity which could destroy their authority with the children, the Formator will see to it "that they never speak unless it is necessary, that they never mention where they came from, that they do not speak too loudly, never laugh with them, and never give them gifts to gain their friendship." This would engender contempt, and the teachers' efforts would have "no good effect" because "the pupils would become insolent and treat him as insignificant." This dangerous familiarity is not to be confused with the simple and "familiar" language they must use to be understood and esteemed by their students.

If teacher trainees are too slow or careless they should be stirred up to make the students work, never leaving them with nothing to do. They should start each period at the set time, hear the children's recital of what they have learned, correct their writing, and see to it that they work at their studies. Everyone should be reading or writing or following the lesson.

The Formator will show new teachers how to protect themselves from special favorites and dangerous affection for their students. He will bring them to understand how far Christian charity extends to all their pupils as well as their fellow teachers. He will not let the student teachers "show more affection for some than for others" but will encourage them "to control themselves rather than seek their own satisfaction" and to give more affection to "those with no redeeming feature." He will require them "never to have favorites among their students" nor bosom friends or pupils entrusted with the "secrets of the school." They "should not speak individually to those who are good-looking, or well-built, if it is not their turn, encouraging them to work well". He "will lead them to realize" to what degree "this kind of particular friendships causes great problems": those who get these privileges "often pride themselves on their friendship and use it for evil ends... and lose all the respect and awe they should have" for the teacher; the rest are "stung with jealousy" for their better-treated classmates "and feel hatred and disgust" for the teacher.

This guarding against particular friendships does not prevent them from liking better, undemonstratively, pupils who "by their piety, fidelity, exactness and docility" and other qualities are more deserving of reward, but merely stops them publicizing the fact by favored treatment.

The Formator will watch carefully the outward demeanor of his student teachers, lest they become dissipated, giddy, distracted, or, on the other hand, so

concentrated on their union with God through recollection of spirit that they cannot properly watch over their students. To correct the first fault, the Formator must get them to stop turning their heads around needlessly and not to look outside the classroom. To cure the second, he must get them into the habit of "looking at their students all the time," taking in the whole class at a glance, "so that if someone were to ask them what so-and-so was doing, they could reply immediately." So, during reading, in order not to lose sight of the place in the book, the reader nor the rest of the class, the young teacher will put "his finger and/or the end of the signal" near the line they are up to. He will gradually get into the way of never losing sight of either the lesson going on or of the class.[41]

To succeed better in this, "it would be good if during the period of their formation," the student teachers did not go into class without reading "three or four times" beforehand, the text which is to be the subject of the lesson. In this way, already having a clear idea of it, it will be easy for them neither to lose the thread of what is being read during the lesson nor the view of every pupil.

Among the fifteen faults La Salle listed for inexperienced teachers, the fourteenth is not very clear in the Avignon manuscript. It is having an "inconstant and changeable cast of mind," in other words, a disposition to vary from day to day things which need to be kept the same.[42] To find a solution for the incompleteness of this manuscript copy, we can trust the meaning of the commentary edited in 1828 entitled "Changes and Inconstancy." So we must "hold firmly" to the tried methods "in order to teach well." With the guidance of the Formator, the rules and principles should only yield place to ones which are better. Some pupils who see a teacher "neglecting on one occasion what he required on another will not know which way to act." This causes needless punishments, murmuring, and scorn. On the other hand, when a teacher **is invariable** in his requirements "for the first week, the pupils will be convinced" that he will always be so, and "get into the habit of acting in a regulated and uniform way."[43] In this way, authority is gained naturally and little intervention is required.

4. Two typical cases of formation

The case of Brother Dominic, the youngest in the Sceillier family from Villiers-le-Bel (95400, Val-d'Oise), is particularly significant. He entered the Paris novitiate in the Rue de Vaugirard, at "Grande Maison," under the direction of Brother John-Henry, who was to die on 1st July 1699 with a reputation for holiness.[44] Dominic had the mystical nature of a Trappist who no longer wanted to "think of anything but loving and serving God." His days were filled with acts of piety, humiliation, penance and generous goodness to those around him. His mental discipline and his efforts to have nothing in view but God were such that his health could scarcely bear it. So his superiors interrupted his novitiate year and had him begin his year of teacher training among the students straight away. His Formator of New Teachers

gave him the class of youngest students. Faced "with light-headed, perpetually-moving students," or pupils who would not stay in their places and had never heard of silent attention, Brother Dominic lost "a little of his recollection" to the advantage of his professional competence. But quite quickly, his spirit of faith led him to see God in each of his restless tots. The Formator came into his classroom an hour after the start of lessons and saw him as though in ecstasy. He asked him if he found it hard to control the class; whereupon Brother Dominic pointed to the entire class, exclaiming: "I can see only God."

This life spent on Tabor did not produce good scholastic results, so the superiors took him out of class and gave him various jobs around the house. When Brother John-Henry died, Brother Dominic became the Director of novices. Once again his complete dedication to constant prayer burned as an interior fire which wrecked his health. So they tried him in school again. He was sent to Darnétal, near Rouen, some months after the brothers took over the parish school in 1705. Once again it proved impossible for him to mix schoolwork with his union with God without great strain. The novitiate had now been transferred from Paris to Saint Yon on the outskirts of Rouen, where the air was "pure and invigorating." So, La Salle finally made him Brother Bartholomew's sub-director of novices. The spiritual atmosphere here suited him, although it kept him from teaching which he felt was his real vocation. His heart, burning with zeal to transform his novices into true religious, and on fire with love for God, could only last eighteen months in his body weakened by a depressing sickness. He died at Saint Yon in 1707.[45]

More than most, this example shows how much the profession of Christian educator needs a **stable personality** which can confine the interior or religious life to its proper place within the scholastic or teaching life. This may bring us back to the statement made by Charles Démia: *not every person is suited to the work of a Christian educator*. This does not mean that a deeply religious person who is not a good teacher cannot be a Brother of the Christian Schools: La Salle accepted people like that and gave them positions as Formators of novices (Claude du Lac de Monrisambert, an officer in the army who became Brother Irenaeus) or gave them positions as bursars, cooks, infirmarians etc.

We will look at a view of the kind of formation given in the *Training College for Country Schoolmasters*. We have the testimony of Firmin Pollet, Superior of the Seminary of Saint Nicholas of Chardonnet in Paris. He remained in this position at the time of the death of John-Baptist de La Salle, as well as during the years 1699 to 1702 when Brother Nicholas Vuyart was doing wonders in the seminary and school in the parish of Saint Hippolytus.[46] He used the term "patrie" to mean his place of birth, his parish or his province:

> *"For me and all my patrie, we owe him (J-B de La Salle) an eternal obligation. He was good enough to train for my needs in the suburb of Saint Marcel,* **four young men to look after the schools**, *who graduated from his care so well-trained and so zealous*

that, if they had found among the clergy of this land someone to nourish the good dispositions he had given them, they would have set up a most useful community for the province: one became a priest and taught humanities to the young in an edifying manner in spite of attacks (...) sometimes coming from the courts and sometimes even from parish priests and clergy."[47]

Because the type of pedagogy suited to an institution for initial formation of teachers does not leave room for pedagogical innovations, continuing formation is just as necessary.

NOTES

1. J-B DE LA SALLE, *Exercices de piété*, Cahiers Lasalliens 18, p. 21.
2. Cahiers Lasalliens 25, p. 68.
3. *Mémoires du clergé*, edition of 1770, vol XIV, column 1040.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 148, § 10.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 99.
7. Cahiers Lasalliens 15, pp. 31-38.
8. BLAIN, *op. cit.* vol 2 in Cahiers Lasalliens 8, *at the end*, p. 5.
9. Cahiers Lasalliens 15, pp. 74-75.
10. Cahiers Lasalliens 25, pp. 145 and 102.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
12. *Conduite des écoles*, editor Br Anselm, p. 313: "You have to give them plenty of practice at conducting classes, during their novitiate"
13. Cahiers Lasalliens, 5, p. 257.
14. BLAIN *op. cit.*, volume II of Cahiers Lasalliens 8, p. 75.
15. Yves POUTET, Les écoles p*opulaires de garçons à Montréal*, Cahiers Lasalliens 48, pp. 315-320.
16. Cahiers Lasalliens 12, 2nd Section, p. 6.
17. Cahiers Lasalliens 12, 2nd Section, p. 140.
18. *Ibid.*,. 2nd Section p. 67.
19. *Ibid.*. p. 75.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
22. Cahiers Lasalliens 5, p. 257, §7.
23. BLAIN, *op. cit., Vol I of Cahiers Lasalliens 7, p. 365.*
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 141-142.
25. *Conduite des écoles*, 1828 edition (Arch. F.E.C., Talence, Section 21), pp. 243-245.
26. Yves POUTET, *Charles Démia*, Cahiers Lasalliens 56, p. 131.

27. *Conduite des écoles*, 1828 edition, p. 248.
28. *Ibid., pp. 253-260.*
29. J-B DE LA SALLE, *Lettres*, critical edition, p. 231.
30. *Conduite des écoles*, 1828 edition, p. 248.
31. cf Positio Roland, p. 576.
32. *Conduite des écoles,* 1828 edition, pp. 263-264.
33. Ms. d'Avignon, (A.D. Vaucluse, H 1) quoted in *Conduite des écoles,* edited by Br Anselm, p. 305.
34. *Ibid.,* pp. 312-315.
35. *Conduite des écoles*, 1828 edition, p. 266.
36. *Conduite des écoles*, edited by br Anselm, p. 315.
37. *Ibid.,* 1828 edition, p. 262.
38. *Conduite des écoles*, edited by Br Anselm, p. 312. In this context, "Conduct" means "behavior."
39. Cahier Lasalliens 15, p. 6; CL 24, p. 228.
40. Brother Agathon, *The Explanation of the Twelve Virtues of a Good Master*, 1785. The full title is much longer. On the influence of Charles Rollin, *Treatise on Studies*, cf G. RIGAULT, *Histoire générale de l'Institut des Frères des écoles chrétiennes*, vol II, p. 576 ff and 590-594.
41. *Conduite des écoles*, edited by Br Anselm,; pp. 306-312.
42. *Ibid.,* p. 305.
43. *Conduite des écoles*, 1828 edition, p. 289.
44. Blain, *op. cit.,* volume II of Cahiers Lasalliens 8, *at the end* pp. 71-76.
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 76-80.
46. Cf P. SCHOENHER, *Histoire du séminaire de Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet*, volume 1, pp. 300, 327. Pollet's second term as superior lasted from 2nd July 1714 until 30th June 1719 (La Salle died 7th April 1719).
47. Quoted by BLAIN *op. cit.*, volume I of Cahiers Lasalliens 7, p. 179.

Chapter Three

ON-GOING FORMATION OF THE TEACHERS

Concern for the continuing formation of teachers in the gratuitous schools gripped La Salle as early as 1679. That was the year when Nyel came from Rouen to Rheims and asked his help in finding a first school for him to run according to the methods which had been tested for twenty years. Nyel was, in fact, overly eager to take his expertise to Guise and Laon although that meant, more or less, abandoning Rheims. So, before La Salle had the vaguest desire to open a novitiate or a training college for teachers he was involved in on-going formation. The idea of lifelong formation was not to leave him because he would quickly perceive, as he was later to write, that one can never know too much about teaching children.

In his *Memoir of the beginnings,* he wrote that the first teachers recruited in Rheims appeared to him to be more uncouth than his personal servant. His biographer Blain then remarks.

> *"M. de La Salle received some new subjects who left the colleges to follow him. Among them were those who were doing courses but gave them up to join him in spite of their parents and the importunate advice of the worldly wise... Convinced... that without being priests or ecclesiastics, they could exercise this ministry which is most necessary and useful for the poor,... they courageously gave up advancement to holy orders and to the hopes... which they could have entertained in a state of life more honorable than that of schoolmaster."*[1]

What La Salle understood by the on-going or continuing formation of teachers, whether Brothers or others, is clear from the following four paragraphs.

1. There was a need for competent formators.
2. Vacation periods and relationships with superiors contributed to the formation of the Brothers,
3. Twice daily, *Meditations on their employment* [i.e. *the Meditations for the Time of retreat*] took up time during the annual retreat for teachers, Brothers or others.
4. The Brothers profited from day-to-day formation and this was inevitably useful for those teachers who asked to be present at their lessons in the classroom. This latter aspect has not been given much attention as it has

only one line in the *Common Rules: Any teacher who wants to learn how to teach... will be allowed into the school* (1718, Chap. 9).

1. Competent Formators

One of the most gifted of those in charge of schools was Brother Henri L'Heureux. La Salle entrusted him with responsibility for the Rheims novitiate and teachers' training college. As the ecclesiastical authorities in the diocese refused to let him become Father La Salle's successor as head of the Brothers because he was not a priest, the Founder set him to study, first in Rheims and then at the Sorbonne, with a theology degree in view. His unexpected death, a few days after Christmas 1690, spelled the end of that program. It confirmed La Salle in his intuition that the duties that go with Christian teaching in gratuitous schools required "a man's total commitment" and were better served, in these "little" schools for boys, by non-clerical religious than by any others.

Brothers Gabriel Drolin and Nicolas Vuyart likewise "studied" before joining the Lasallian community. They were able to speak Latin. The former succeeded Nyel as head of the school in Laon in 1685. In 1691 he associated himself with La Salle and Nicolas Vuyart in a "foundation vow," by which the three undertook to bring about the successful establishment of the Brothers of the Christian Schools "until the death of the last survivor" even if "only the three of them remained." Such a responsibility assumed "with common consent" presumes an obvious ability to train teachers and run schools. Otherwise, there would have been no prospect that the bishops would have approved the project they had undertaken. While, around 1700, Drolin was sent to Rome to establish a Lasallian school under the Pope's very eyes, Nicolas Vuyart, in Paris, directed the training college for country teachers in the parish of Saint Hippolyte. His know-how so impressed Antoine Forget, a recruit the Sulpicians entrusted to Nicolas to get him ready within six months for the Sulpician school in Montreal, that he requested permission from his superiors to put aside the traditional methods of teaching and replace them with those of "Monsieur de La Salle." His request was granted and Brother Nicolas procured for him the books he could use to set up that way of teaching.[2]

John Partois, known as Brother Antoine, deserves to be ranked with Brothers Drolin and Vuyart in the team of skilled formators. He took over the running of the school in Laon from Drolin and was in charge in 1701-1702. He had been in the Institute since 1686. He was in charge of a community in Paris from 1702 to 1704. He opened the one in Dijon in 1705, then became the leader of the community in Mende in 1708. At the time of the General Chapter in 1734, he was at Saint Yon, near Rouen, and took part in the deliberations. Thanks to his long experience, he contributed to the transmission and enrichment of Lasallian methods. Right up to his death, in 1743, at Saint Yon, he continued to be a very useful witness to the younger Brothers.

2. Formation by the Superiors

Continuing formation of the teachers in the Lasallian system relied to a large extent on the religious and pedagogical qualities of the superiors, that is, of the Directors of communities, Visitors and even of the Superior General. It was in September 1691 that La Salle took advantage of the school holidays and gathered together all the Brothers "who had been in community for three or four years to renew them in spirit by means of a good retreat." The gathering took place at Vaugirard, then near Paris, on a property situated at the corner of what is now rue Copreau. As he had at his disposal some young men previously trained in his *College for country teachers* in Rheims, and which had closed down, he used them to replace the Brothers in their schools in "Paris, Rheims, Laon and elsewhere." These schools re-opened as usual on 2nd October while their ordinary teachers prolonged their retreat, as a kind of religious and educational improvement course, until "the end of the year" 1691.[3]

It was at this time that La Salle asked the Brothers to give him an account of their professional and religious conduct by means of a monthly letter. He obliged himself to respond faithfully to such letters. A few years later when the number of Brothers and communities had increased, this written dialogue with the Superior was reduced to once every two months. However, there was no restriction on a Brother writing more frequently if he so desired. *The Rule* of 1718 confirmed this custom while stating that a *Directory* was at their disposal to help them in composing their report. The Directors of communities were still obliged to write their monthly letter, but, one month they dealt with their personal regularity and the next month with the behavior of the Brothers and how the classes were getting along.[4]

Among the themes to be tackled, the Directory mentioned:

- The profit drawn from warnings and advice.
- What fault he was fighting against at that time.
- Union with his Brothers.
- His enthusiasm for school and zeal for his students' salvation.
- How he taught.
- Whether he observed or neglected the *Rule for School.*
- Whether he was hard-working in school and how he used his time.
- His attention to silence in class.
- What care he took to get the children to make progress in all that was taught.
- His fidelity in following the Institute's catechetical method.
- The constant care he took to pitch his teaching to the level of the intelligence of the children.
- To what extent he avoided impatience with regard to the whole class or to particular pupils.
- Whether his remarks, reprimands and corrections were marked by moderation, and what good or bad fruits came from them.[5]

Apart from this correspondence which enabled the Superior to get to know the diverse abilities of all the Brothers and, consequently, to place them in the most appropriate schools, he intervened directly in each house on the occasion of his periodical visits.

From the beginning of the 18th century, La Salle, after opening communities south of the Loire, delegated his powers to Brothers whom he called "Visitors." The duties of the latter were limited to one visit a year and only to the houses listed on their obediences. Thus, Brother Joseph was appointed on 15th July 1708 to "visit the houses in Rethel, Guise, Laon and Rheims" whose Directors were to "make known to him all that was happening" in their schools and communities.[6]

Before and after these visits, the Visitor rejoined the community to which he belonged, in this case Rouen, where he was Director. The essential role of the Visitor was to counsel the Brothers as the Superior would have done and to report to him so that, subsequently, he could respond in a more appropriate way to the monthly letters.

The role of the Brother Director was considerable. At one and the same time he "directed" the community and the schools for which it was responsible, but only under the guidance and authority of the Brother Superior."[7] He manifested "affection and very special heartfelt tenderness" towards the Brothers, both those teaching and those employed in temporal duties, "who were under his guidance." Each week, he interviewed each Brother individually to become cognizant of his difficulties, his troubles, his joys, and his successes or failures with the pupils and, as a result, to offer him suitable advice. The matters discussed obviously concerned the same things which made up the correspondence with the Superior, but they were not approached in the same light.[8] Much more precise pedagogical detail relating to particular local requirements was taken into consideration. The concern was not with general principles, but with the application *here and now* by reason of circumstances which were often unique.

3. Formation during holidays

In the times of Louis XIV, Lasallian schools had holidays in the month of September, except where local privileges prevailed. Eight full days were dedicated to the annual retreat which gathered the Brothers together in the novitiate house, unless they were too far away. The other three weeks left them long periods of time to deepen their knowledge as teachers and Christian educators.

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8.30 to 10.00 a.m. and from 4.45 to 5.30 p.m. they increased their knowledge of the subjects they were teaching or that they would be called on to teach. From 2.30 to 3.30 p.m. they read the *Rules for School* which would be printed in 1720 with the title *Management of Schools*. Discussions, led by the Director in the form of a conference, were followed by a "recreation." This word could give a wrong impression. The "recreation" consisted in talking about what was most important for each of them, what was nearest to

their hearts viz. how to relate to the children so that they got the most out of their schooling.

On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays the holiday schedule was the same as that of Thursdays throughout the year. During the morning half an hour was "dedicated" to the study of arithmetic. The afternoon was completely taken up with a walk.[9] Here again, it is important to grasp what this word meant for the Brothers. Each community, in small groups if it was numerous, headed for a destination capable of offering something of interest by way of uniqueness, instruction or relaxation. The subject of conversation consisted of what one or another had read, religious questions, entertaining stories and teaching or educational methods which enabled the pupils to make more rapid progress. Neither the theater, other forms of entertainment, social visits nor various facts gleaned from newspapers intervened to disturb these afternoon walks. The experience of each in school contributed to the improvement of all.

It is easy to imagine the extent to which, during these three weeks year after year, a quick and genuine rise in the secular and religious knowledge of the Brothers was effected. Nothing distracted them from the immutable demands of their "employment" and of their "state" as persons consecrated to God for their disinterested service of the children of the masses.

The eight-day retreats were not solely religious in nature but, in the middle of the month of September, provided a time most suitable for continuous training, professional as much as religious. Linking together the secular and sacred, La Salle supplied Christian educators with sixteen meditations on the work in school, two for each day of the retreat. Before him Fr Barré treated the same questions in lectures given to men and women teachers in Rouen and Paris. His successor at the head of the Teaching Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus, Father Giry, published some meditations inspired by them. This work, formerly mistakenly attributed to Charles Démia (1637 - 1689) because of the handwritten copies preserved in the archives of religious teaching Sisters, among them the Sisters of Saint Charles in Lyons, deserves to be compared with that of the Founder of the Brothers. Its date of printing was 1687. La Salle knew it. His Brothers made use of it before they had Lasallian Meditations at their disposal.[10] Here is the fairly revealing title of Father Giry's book:

> *Meditations for the Teaching Sisters of the charitable schools of the Holy Child Jesus of the Institute of the late Rev.Fr. Barré, Minim, principally for the time of their retreats and spiritual exercises, on the principal duties of their state, and which can be used by other men and women teachers to acquaint them with the importance and obligations of their profession. By Rev. Fr. Giry, ex-provincial of the Minims and director of the same Institute. Paris, Pierre de Launay 1687.*[11]

The professional aim of the teachers was to form children in all the virtues and thereby to collaborate in the work of God. Conversion of the self to Christian

perfection was imperative to succeed in this. The means available to them in school was that of instructing pupils in all they needed "to know so as to live well." It was not enough to respond to their human demands: the task had to be done with diligence, zeal and charity understood in the sense of genuine love. The sacraments assisted good living by procuring divine aid in avoiding vice. Teaching class and running schools were not only useful, but more necessary than many other occupations, for the habits contracted in the early years influenced the whole of life and were corrected with difficulty. Since teachers were the delegates and substitutes of the parents, they were imposed with responsibilities that required appropriate behavior from them. Their "first duty was to teach young people and others living in ignorance not only to read, write, calculate and perform various tasks, all of which were elements of knowledge highly regarded and sought after by the world, because they were useful for living in it more comfortably and honorably in the different circumstances in which people find themselves, but above all their duty was to teach those things that refer to the science of salvation." Among the virtues to be developed in the children are some which were as valuable to non-Christians as to Christians, for they were inherent in human nature: gentleness in relationships, truth in conversations, and patience in the face of adversity. To teach was not sufficient. Practice was needed in doing good with vigilance and correcting with prudence. Modesty, gravity, good example in everything, disinterested devotion, patience and courage were essential qualities for every teacher who saw it as his duty to be an educator. Those were the essential pedagogical qualities and virtues which La Salle, a disciple of Father Barré, encouraged the Brothers of the Christian Schools to acquire.

Later, the Brothers heard their Founder give expression to his own convictions. It seemed that these subjects for meditation were finalized only after 1707.[12] They were designed to nourish the reflections of the teachers at both the afternoon gatherings each day of the annual eight-day retreat. Brother Timothy, Superior in 1730, echoed what he retained of his own retreats when he emphasized how "the consideration or examination which takes place twice a day in the form of a meditation, and reflection on the deeds of one's life and the duties of one's state, is of the utmost importance."[13]

While taking up the major ideas of Father Barré, La Salle endeavored to present their common beliefs by referring them to scriptural sources in such a way that his *Sixteen Meditations* are, in a manner of speaking, woven out of Biblical texts, mainly the Gospels and Saint Paul. Jesus, the educator, is the model teacher. Saint Paul's pieces of advice, sometimes rational, sometimes drawn from his own experience and sometimes based on the Revelation of Christ, were introduced by way of reinforcement. The title adopted by the Rouen editor in 1730, and accepted by the Brothers, indicated secular teachers as co-addressees of the work: *Meditations for the time of retreat for the use of persons engaged in the education of youth, and especially for the retreat the Brothers of the Christian Schools make during the holidays*. They were sometimes referred to under the title "*Meditations on their employment.*" Teaching Sisters, ecclesiastics running schools, and the parents of the students were all considered capable of profiting from them.

The parents, the author pointed out, were first in responsibility before God in the education of their children. Every Christian teacher received delegated responsibility from them. The Christian school found a remedy for the vagrancy of the children whose parents, too preoccupied with the necessity of gaining a livelihood, could not instruct them themselves. Teachers received the mission from the families and the Church to "bring them up in the Christian spirit." This Christian education implied not only secular and religious instruction but also **great vigilance** so that the children avoided all bad actions. The teachers were then "co-operators with Jesus Christ" and visible guardian angels of their pupils. Their usefulness was undeniable, not only for the children but still more for the Church. In order that their zeal be efficacious, it was imperative that their example "uphold their teaching." Their remarks, reprimands and corrections directed towards their pupils were to be motivated only by **affection** and the desire to see them progress "in wisdom, age and grace before God and men" as says the Gospel cited by La Salle in the prelude to his Meditation for the Sunday after the Epiphany (CL 13, p.17). The essential patience and gentleness were not a reality without great self-mastery. And this was acquired by frequent examination of the teacher's own conduct, by as continuous a union with God as was feasible, by the conviction that every teacher was answerable to God for his manner of acting and that he would give an account of it. However, the account to be given should not engender fear, for the happiness of the teacher in heaven would be all the greater as he would have "instructed and won for God" a greater number of children.[14]

Several useful elements in the formation of teachers supplemented those indicated in Father Giry's *Meditations*. Let us cite the main ones:

The **liberty** of the children, willed by God through the laws of creation, could not be respected and correctly developed without divine help, for God alone can enlighten from within without constraining. Revealing truth to children does not consist in imposing it through authority but in making it meaningful.[15] Certainly, that is the case with religious truths which can be communicated only through force of witnesses worthy of trust. But it also applies to the whole body of scientific truths, to be differentiated from research hypotheses, which make up the core of the teaching. To justify in their minds the practices and techniques recommended to the children rather than impose them from above is an integral part of that pedagogy which is respectful of people's intelligence. Reading, writing, counting and preparing for professional work were directly taken into account.[16] To demand that the teacher make the pupils avoid "sin" was to require that great vigilance turn them away from temptations to steal, to fight, to be lazy or angry, to tell lies, to act indecently or to affront modesty.[17] Without using the term, the study of child psychology was recommended as a necessary means for teachers to preserve their pupils from the dangers that stalked the weakness of their minds and bodies. "Knowledge of the ordinary defects of young people is part of the pedagogical skills which are acquired only through experience over some years through constant sharing with others."[18]

The pedagogy of **catechetical teaching**, because of the revealed nature of what was taught, called for continual recourse to God in prayer so that it was really

his message that was being conveyed and not the subjective interpretations of the teacher.[19] What was to be developed in the pupils was the filial fear of displeasing God, of losing his love which is the foundation of eternal happiness. [20] Teaching horror of false oaths, love of those who speak ill of us, submission to parents, esteem for the poor who are like Christ who was poor, was as necessary as the personal example which prompted the practice of these things.[21]

Not to neglect the most backward pupils, nor the least gifted, nor the poorest and to show no preference for the most "personable" were so many requirements of justice from the viewpoint of "the spirit of faith" explained in the *Rule* and the *Collection*, which refers all to God. The obligation to use the time set aside by the Rule to improve one's knowledge was likewise part of the daily particular examen or the other daily, monthly or annual examinations which the teachers were asked never to omit. In fact, it was important to know perfectly everything one was "obliged to teach" the pupils. Finally, what God expected of the teacher was a constant and affectionate care for the pupils, not only during class but also outside of class.[22]

It is certainly a pity that these *Meditations on employment* do not mention the unavoidable relationships of the school with **the State.** Granted that La Salle, in his pedagogy, did not attribute as important a place to the State as to the **family** and the **Church**, but he did not neglect its importance. In his *Meditation for the feast of Saint Louis, King of France*, he saw in the zeal of this prince for "the good of the Church and of his State" an example to be followed by the Christian teacher who was "to join zeal for the good of the Church with zeal for the good of the State."[23]

Apart from the *Meditations for the time of retreat*, and well before their publication, La Salle, as early as 1705, had a condensed form of his principal directives approved by pontifical authorities in Avignon. In this *Collection of short treatises for the use of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, one chapter deals with some *Considerations the Brothers are to make on their state and employment*[24] *from time to time and especially during their retreat*. In 48 pages of the 1711 edition, a large number of reflections are suggested. Let us highlight only a few of them which impinge on the behavior of the teachers in their classes:

- "Do not make any distinction between the particular duties of your state and those which refer to your salvation... You will never effect your salvation more surely... than by fulfilling well the duties of your state, provided you do so in view of doing the will of God."
- "With what attention and interior dispositions do you perform the **duties of your employment**? How do you behave and what moderation do you observe when things that you undertake... do not succeed as you desire?"
- "In the exercises of your employment, are you not led by your own natural impulse and inclination rather than by the spirit of God?"
- "In what do you chiefly fail? Are you too hasty and eager or too lifeless and indifferent?"
- "Strive to perform your duties as perfectly as you know how, without being worried about how perfectly they may be performed. By doing as well as

you know how, you deserve to learn and know that perfection of which you are still ignorant."

It is not surprising to meet, in the examination of conscience for the whole year, a number of issues like this one for example: "Unite all your actions with the actions and plans of Jesus Christ." This is because the profession of the Christian teacher is considered by La Salle to be a genuine **ministry** in the Church. The teacher can always rely on divine **assistance** if he really asks for it in prayer. It is not sufficient to develop the knowledge, intelligence and will power of the pupils. It is proper to be watchful so that their instinct for imitation, which leads them to do as their teachers or companions do, does not lead them to do evil but to do good, bringing them to put on "the new man... created in the likeness of God" as Saint Paul requested.[25]

It is acknowledged that the **good use of time** contributes to the smooth running of a class especially when it comprises several groups at different levels. Order and method are necessary not only when facing the pupils but also before and after school hours, to prepare lessons and to reflect how they have been more or less profitable. La Salle therefore suggests that the teacher ask himself:

—"Are you systematic in your actions?—Do you not sometimes let time flow by uselessly because you have not kept to the schedule you are supposed to follow? - Do you consider yourself as culpable when you are engaged in what you are not supposed to be doing as when you do not comply with what your profession requires?"[26]

The **last three days of each year** complete the special periods of formation throughout one's lifetime. It is like a second retreat focusing on one's profession and relationship with God. Just as children carry out revision at the end of the school year, three evenings of revision of life on 29th, 30th and 31st December are proposed for the teachers. The general directions are given in the *Meditations for the principal feasts*. Some of the questions asked can be taken up again later on in the class. On the one hand, they remind pupils of their duties to God; on the other hand, their duty to use everything according to the requirements which flow from Christian respect for creation, which we would today classify as ecological. Thus, on 29th December, La Salle cites what Saint Paul told "the faithful of his day: *Whether you eat or drink, whatever else you do, do all for the glory of God*, and elsewhere *in eating, in drinking, in all that you do, do everything in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ*.. Such should be the sole consolation of the Christian in this life, to do all for the Lord who made him, from whom he holds whatever he has."[27] On 30th December, duties towards the neighbor and especially towards the students are passed in review:

- "Your first duty to your pupils is to give them edification and good example... Have you kept in mind that you must be a model of the virtues which you wish them to practice."

- "Has your conduct during the past year been that of a good teacher?"
- "Have you taught those under your guidance all the other subjects such as *reading, writing and the rest*, with all possible earnestness? If that has not been the case in the past year you will have a serious account to render to God, not only of your time, but also of your food and all the necessaries of life that you have been provided with" since that was the reason for which "*what you needed*" was given to you.

On 31st December the meditation is on "regularity," that is, on how the *Rules* have been observed in the community and in the school. As regards **relationships** with parents of pupils and with others the examination deals with the patience to bear with possible insults, reserve in behavior and the quality of the example given. As for conduct **in school** it requires exactness "in following the timetable," the use of the "signal," to avoid talking too much, "always to correct" the pupils when they make a mistake, to "teach catechism every day," never to waste time, which in this profession does not belong to the teacher but is to be devoted completely "to the welfare of the scholars," and to accept nothing from the pupils, not even "some snuff" since the school must be run gratuitously.[28]

The on-going formation of the teachers was marked by annual retreats and sessions during the holidays and also each week, especially on Thursdays and Sundays. But it was equally taken into account on other days by means of the meticulous timetables.

4. Daily formation

The regulations contained times each day devoted to the formation of the teachers. A copy of the manuscript entitled *Practice of the daily regulations* provides us with the elements as they were lived before the drafting of the *Common Rule* of 1705. In the morning, at breakfast time, they read pedagogical and instructive advice which came from the *Management of Schools*. This served as a reminder of how to act in class and how to teach reading, writing, arithmetic and catechism. Each day for almost an hour in the morning and a little less after coming home from school in the afternoon, the teachers practiced writing. This provided an opportunity for preparing models for their pupils. The teachers of the upper classes "studied in the registers" that is, they did their best to read collections of memoirs, minutes and correspondence, writings done hastily rather than calligraphy. "If there is remaining time after morning classes, catechism will be studied." During the midday meal reading from the *New Testament*, an abridged life of a saint and an edifying book completed the catechetical formation of the teachers and supplied material for pondering to educate the minds, hearts and manners of the pupils. A second period of catechetical study followed the afternoon classes. In the course of the years, this became theological study. During the meal, the reading of *Bible History*, the

Apocalypse and the *Epistles* of the *New Testament* improved Biblical knowledge. At 8.00 p.m., for half an hour, the teachers planned how they would spread questions and answers in their next lesson of religious instruction and they sought ways of making them understood.

On Sundays and feast days, the community gathered for a public reading of the *New Testament* followed by a discussion on what had been read. A considerable amount of time was devoted to the art of writing and to deepening catechetical knowledge. On holidays, as on Thursdays, in addition to what was usual, an extra half hour to study the rules of arithmetic was written in.

Reading the *Rules for School* assured a thorough knowledge of what to do on the last day before the September holidays. Let us quote the *Practice of the daily regulations* which recalls it: "Catechism is taught... on how the scholars should spend holiday time. Then the teachers distribute **rewards** to the scholars according to the regularity of their attendance and their piety. Their work is given back to the writers and models[29] are given out so that they can practice writing **during the holidays**. The names of all the scholars must be written... in a register which records their ages, their names and their conduct, the lessons they are at and how long they have been at that level. The scholars must be told the day on which "the schools" (classes) recommence and be warned to be there right from the morning of that day[30] to enable them to be present for the Mass of the Holy Spirit which will be said for them, and that those who are not there will remain on the same lessons they are at and will not advance to a higher lesson."[31]

Notes regarding the "conduct" of the pupils, that is, their usual behavior, their way of reacting, were a help in allocating them better when the school re-opened. Indicating the lesson they had reached was the same as noting the degree or level of their abilities in each subject of the program taught. However, it is advisable to have a correct understanding of the sanction foreseen when a pupil missed out on the first day of class or came late the first morning. In fact, the pupils did not change classes or "lessons" only once each year but at the end of each month. The latecomer on re-opening day, 2nd October, missed out only on the first event which was the process of changing lessons or classes. So, he was kept down for a month. It is somewhat like an application of the rule for queues of people according to which "he who moves out of line loses his place."

The *Common Rules,* of which one copy of the 1705 edition exists, shows progress on the *Practice of the daily regulations*. The *Rules* of 1718 corresponds with further growth and this means that La Salle was careful that from one General Chapter to the next, the Brothers update their teaching strategies in the light of their own culture, that of the families of the poor and of society in general. Let us pass straight on to the 1726 edition, the first after the approbation of the Institute by letters patent from the king and the Bull from the Pope. The Brothers had a wider formation and they would not stop developing it in the future.

Each day three quarters of a hour was set aside "for the writing or reading of French or Latin or letters written by hand to improve in them;" young Brothers

who could read well enough "study and recite the catechism according to the needs of each." Teachers of the "writing class" can use the time "for arithmetic." At breakfast it was no longer only the *Rules for school* that were read, but the important work published in 1720 which was called the *Management of Schools*. In the course of the year, when the Management was finished, an instructive book was read.

Each Sunday evening, in every community, the Brothers gathered to take part in a "catechism of formation". One of them dealt with a topic by asking questions and sub-questions of all the others. He gave an explanation and tried to elicit the most judicious answers. Great simplicity was required of those who took part in order that the experience of each one be profitable for all. This public performance, taken in turns, demanded serious preparation.

On the weekly holiday, that is on Thursdays, a half hour's catechetical study followed by two hours of practice and study of "writing, arithmetic and spelling" was prescribed. These subjects made up the program of elementary schools.[32] In fact, neither La Salle nor the Brothers of 1726 confined themselves to these alone. Adult courses leading into surveying as well as geometric design—necessities in the building trade—had already been run in the parish of Saint Sulpice for apprentices seeking professional development.

It is appropriate to add to these formative elements the "recreations" which followed the midday and evening meals. The *Lasallian Collection of short treatises* points out how these recreations could serve for the instruction and improvement of each one. Rather than remain sitting in a drawing room, the teachers took some exercise by walking. When the community was large, some walked forward while others faced them and walked backwards. They spoke first of what was instructive in the reading during the meal. The lives of the saints, especially those who practiced the teaching "ministry" were the topics of conversation. Reflections on the purposes of the Christian school revived flagging courage. Recalling the virtues and example of deceased Brothers was mixed with memories which, sometime, did not lack salt. It also happened that the recollection of amusing incidents in school gave pleasure and suggested new means of succeeding in class. They were recommended to speak of the duty "of instructing the pupils well," of the virtues to be practiced in school such as charity, in the sense of affection for the children, moderation, silence etc. Faults to be avoided were not forgotten: "impatience, harshness, familiarity, weakness, etc.

Each week a conference of the Director to his community contributed to this continuous formation. It took the form either of a discussion or of a reading followed by an exchange of views with the Brothers.[33] In fact, when several schools existed in the same town or in an extensive parish, La Salle preferred to group the teachers together in a single community. The *Rule of the Brother Director* specified that he was to take care of "his house" (community) and the schools dependent on it.[34] Each area school was under the charge of a "head teacher" but after morning and afternoon classes all the Brothers returned to the community house. They usually had two experienced confreres to be their constant help in resolving pedagogical problems

which arose in the course of the school year. But it was mainly the Director's responsibility to watch over everything, to see that all went well and that the competence of each one in his position was not only adequate but also continually improving. His position as formator was so important that he was asked to dispense himself "from mental prayer rather than from recreation."[35] Each week he met with the teachers individually to hear of their joys and their difficulties according to a *Directory* from which we garner some topics of the conversation: state of health, zeal for the "external duties" of the profession, how the Brother teaches class, how he reproves pupils for their faults, the care he brings to see that they make progress "in reading and writing and if he has chiefly sought to make them pious" and his harshness or gentleness with the pupils, especially in the matter of **corrections**.[36]

This last word was preferred to "punishments" for it better expressed Lasallian thinking. Correction was a matter of righting what was twisted and defective for the good of the offender and not of avenging justice or treating rights with contempt. The conditions for satisfactory correction were enumerated elsewhere so that no one could be unaware of its importance. The teacher must be "pure" of all ulterior motive, charitable (a quality that is motivated by friendly sentiments), just, moderate, peaceful, prudent and respectful of the proprieties. He also had to obtain from the pupil caught in a misdemeanor a calm acceptance of the correction and a respectful attitude.[37]

On the subject of these corrections the *Common Rules* are particularly explicit. Chapter VIII deals with "how to behave" then goes on:

> *"Punish the pupils very rarely" because "this one of the chief means of managing" the school and "of establishing very good order,"*
>
> *If punishment is necessary, "do it with great moderation and self-possession... never in hastiness" or when the teacher is excited, for neither "the passion of anger nor the slightest touch of impatience" have any part since, unless they take this precaution "the pupils will not profit by the correction" and "God will not give it his blessing. No "abusive or unbecoming names will be given the children. They will never be struck with the hand, fist, foot or pointer," nor even "pushed rudely." The teachers will not pull them by the ears, nose or hair. "They will never throw them" the strap or anything else and make them fetch it," all these ways of correcting "being very unbecoming, opposed to Christian charity and to meekness."*[38]

The experience of the Director enabled him, in the course of the weekly conversation called "reddition," meaning an accounting for one's conduct, to give each teacher useful advice suggesting various ways of acting appropriate to his character as well as to that of the pupils in his class. After the "reddition," the

Brother was invited to reflect on the advice he had received and foresee the specific means he would take to follow it. Week after week, thanks in large part to the relationships of confidentiality and confidence, which existed with the Director, pedagogical progress was noteworthy. The most critical biographies of Brothers little gifted in the way of study bear witness to this.[39]

Another weekly exercise contributed to the improvement of the Brother's behavior in class. It was the "advertisement of defects."[40] On Friday evening, each one in turn begged his confreres to point out to him his **external** defects to help him to correct them. This exercise no longer appears in the *Rule* of 1986 so it is appropriate to think back to other times to understand it properly. There was absolutely no suggestion of unveiling defects more or less hidden but of pointing out to the person concerned what was known by everyone with whom he lived. Among the deficiencies harmful to real success in class and referred to here and there in the *Rule* and *Management of Schools* could be mentioned: inappropriate physical behavior, a tone of voice inducing a smile or so loud that it could be heard in the next classroom, insults, striking the pupils, negligences of many kinds, favoritism for one pupil perceived as unjust by the others, mistakes in teaching, breaches in the rule of absolute gratuity which forbade receiving any gift whatsoever from the scholars or their parents and wasting time during preparation of lessons or personal studies.

To become aware of the improvement he must bring to his conduct, the Brother did not wait for the moment of his "reddition" or "the advertisement of defects" which marked each week. Each day, in the presence of his confreres he acknowledged the external deficiencies he detected in the course of a quick examination in the evening. This was known as the "accusation." It ended with a formula asking pardon for any bad example given. Behavior in class had a large part in it. Certainly, it concerned only failures anyone could have noticed, but it was a way of showing regret for them and taking on the social obligation of better self-control in the future. It should be noted that the "accusation" is no longer in vogue these days.

Public and private reading of the *Common Rules* forced the Brother, in chapter 7, never to forget "the manner of acting in school with regard to the pupils." Indeed, this advice was repeated in the *Management of Schools* with suitable development. But, precisely, what had to be noticed to understand properly the intensity of the continuous formation of the Brothers, was the great number of occasions from which they could benefit to recall and to hear others around them recall a multitude of details and advice capable of helping them to become better teachers. Repetition was for La Salle one of the most efficacious pedagogical means to make the school effective. Let us not hesitate, then, to read again a few passages from chapter 7:

The teachers "will pay continual attention to three things in school: first, during the lesson, to correct all the words badly pronounced by the pupil who is reading; second, make all who are reading the same lesson follow; third, have the

scholars keep silence exactly throughout school hours." "They will teach the schoolchildren to read French first, then Latin, third, letters written by hand, and to write. They will also teach spelling and arithmetic. Everything will be done as prescribed in the *First part* of the *Management of Schools*. They will, however, make it their first and principal care to teach their pupils the morning and evening prayers, the Pater, the Ave, the Credo, and the Confiteor, and these same prayers in French; the Commandments of God and of the Church, the Responses for Mass, the Catechism, the duties of a Christian and the maxims and practices Our Lord has left us in the Gospel..."

"The Brothers will endeavor, by their whole exterior and their entire conduct, to be a continual example of modesty to their pupils and of all the other virtues which they should teach them and urge them to practice."

"They will love all of their pupils sincerely; they will not, however, be familiar with any nor give them anything through particular friendship."[41]

As a complement to the *Rules,* constant reading of the *Collection of various short treatises* contributed to the pedagogical formation of the Brothers. Apart from a general directive, a list of the "virtues of a good teacher" presented elsewhere, and of faults on which it is worthwhile to examine himself, this booklet sets out some passages of Holy Scripture on which it is useful for Christian teachers desirous of improving their conduct to meditate. For example:

"*When teaching school*: Watch yourself and watch your teaching. Keep on doing these things, because if you do, you will save both yourself and those who hear you."

"Teach all nations... teaching them to observe everything (Jesus Christ) commanded you."

"*When correcting anyone*: The man who loves his son frequently chastises him. You will strike him with rods and deliver his soul from hell. (God) will apply to you the same rules you apply to others."

"*When writing or teaching writing*: Lord, you write bitter things against me (Job, 13). Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord..."

"*When teaching catechism*: It is a happy person who is concerned with wisdom. Son, learn to value wisdom while you are young, and you will still be able to find her when you grow old. Your teachings are wonderful; I obey them with all my heart. The ignorant will die in want of understanding. I am Wisdom; I am better than jewels; nothing you want can compare with me."[42]

The whole process of formation comprised readings, self-examinations, dialogue with a Director as well as either with more experienced confreres or those in formation whom he agreed to encourage and advise. It is worth noting that all of this encouraged the development of qualities essential for every good Christian educator. The adjective "Christian" is vital here, for every act of this on-going formation is shot through with or by faith in a God who cares for the happiness of the creation into the bosom of which his Son was incarnated, thereby indicating the enormous dignity of humankind.

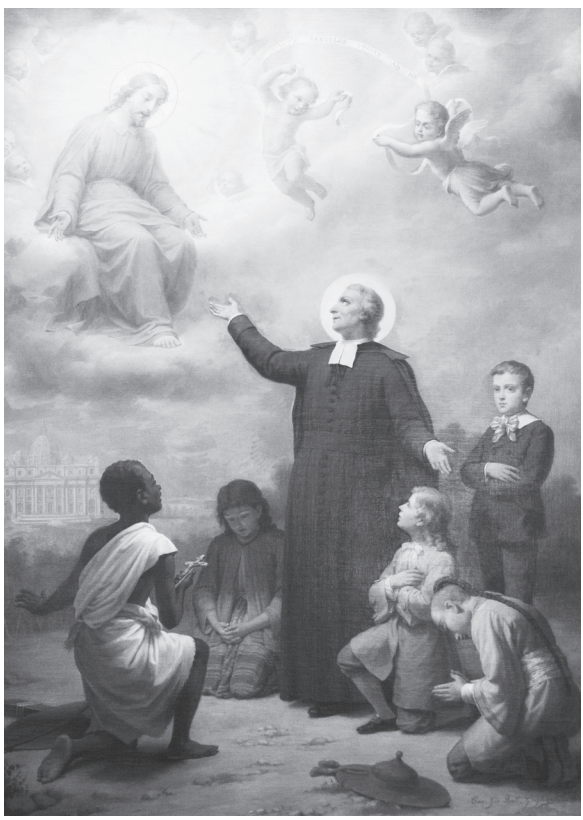
It remains for us to uncover the main characteristics of the pedagogy which was set up. This will be done in a context of the continual relationships between the teacher, the children, the parents, the Church and the State.

NOTES

1. BLAIN, *op. cit.*, Volume I, CL 7, p. 169.
2. CL 48, PP.296-362.
3. BLAIN, *op. cit.*, Volume I, CL 7, p. 315.
4. CL 25, p. 90.
5. CL 15, pp. 122-130.
6. J.-B. DE LA SALLE, *Lettres*, critical edition, p. 233.
7. CL 25, p. 155.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.
10. In 1970 (cf. *Le XVIIe s. et les origines lasalliennes*, Vol. I, p. 475,n. 44) I had not verified the authenticity or otherwise of attributing to Démia, as was frequently done, 15 meditations arbitrarily dated from 1682 by various biographers who repeated Faillon. What were under consideration were 10 meditations of Father Giry inspired by Father Barré, and five discussions or lectures, the whole having been found in manuscript copies at the Sisters of Saint Charles in Lyons. It was a mistake.
11. This edition of 96 pages is listed in Peter Conlon's *Chronological Index from 1680 to 1715*, Vol. I, art. 3380. A copy is preserved in the archives of the Sisters of the Child Jesus in Rheims (ms. 5 D). Another, adapted to male teachers is in the archives of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, 476 Via Aurelia, Rome. A second edition, somewhat later, in 1687, is included in the *Statutes and Regulations of the Christian and charitable schools of the Child Jesus*. A third appears in the 1820 edition of the same Statutes. A fourth is dated 1910. It is part of The *Constitutions of the Sisters of Providence of Rouen*. Although they were put together with the help of Father Barré's notes, these *Meditations* "edited" by Fr. Giry do not appear in the *Complete Works* of Father Barré (ed. Du Cerf, Paris 1944) but they are simply indicated (e.g. p. 191, no. 1).
12. CL 1, p.XVIII. When La Salle wrote his own *Meditations*, it was the French translation of the *New Testament* by the Oratorian, Amelote, ed.1707, which came to his mind.
13. CL 13, at the back, p. 5.
14. CL 13, p. 79.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 49.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 69-71.
23. CL 12, pp. 138-139.
24. CL 15, pp. 84-118.
25. *Ibid.*, p.66.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 94-98, 104.
27. CL 12, Part 2, p. 245.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 251-252.
29. In the manuscript, I read "are given back" not "are sold" as is given in the recent edition (CL 25). The *Conduct* confirms it from another source: "they **will give back** the work and they **will give** models". (CL 24, p. 202)
30. In the manuscript I have read "right from the morning" but the 1706 edition of the Management specifies "from 7:00 a.m." in the edition of CL 24, p.203.
31. CL 25, pp. 4,8, 98-135, the paragraphs about RC 2.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 95-135, the paragraphs about RC 2.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 154.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 155.
36. CL 15, pp. 18-22.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 6, 18-22.
38. CL 25, pp. 38-40.
39. The collection of Necrological Notices of the Brothers can easily be consulted in the majority of residences of the Brothers Visitors. From 1733 some appeared after the biography of J-B de La Salle. cf. CL 8.
40. CL 25, pp. 25ff.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-37.
42. CL 15, p. 53.

Part 3



Principal characteristics of Lasallian pedagogy

Chapter One

THE TEACHER: A COLLABORATOR WITH PARENTS

The prime responsibility for the education of the child belongs by natural right to the parents. In the Lasallian school, this fundamental right has its origins in God, creator of all human life, through the medium of the parents. No human authority therefore can go against this first responsibility. In the school situation, it finds expression in a close collaboration between teachers and parents. The role of the children, the link between these two groups, cannot be ignored because while they can make their different teachers aware of the wishes and example of their parents, it is also their role to bring to the attention of their parents the knowledge and good habits they would learn at a Lasallian school. Therefore, two aspects need to be considered:

1. The teachers are given their mission by the parents and the Church.
2. The children, through the agency of the school, bring to their parents the knowledge and values they have learned at school.

1. Parents and the Church-commissioned teachers

No one could be a good teacher unless he knew from where he received the authority which he exercised over the pupils. In this domain the pedagogy of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle is based on theology and on the sociology of the family. The state, the government and a town or regional authority have their input, inasmuch as they are charged with looking after the common good, a duty delegated to them by individuals and families, but the essential element is defined in the following majestic passage taken from the *Meditations*, on the function of the school.

> *"It is one of the principal duties of fathers and mothers to raise their children in a Christian manner and to teach them their religion, but since the majority are not sufficiently enlightened in this matter, and because on the one hand, there are those who are busy with temporal matters and the care of their family, and on the other hand, those whose constant worry is to gain the necessities of life for themselves and their family, they cannot make time to teach them the duties of a Christian, it has seemed right for Divine providence, whose concern it is to watch over humans, to* **substitute**

> *for parents persons who would have the insight and zeal to bring the children to the knowledge of God and His mysteries; persons who would take every possible means to put the foundations of religion and Christian piety in the hearts of these children (a large number of whom have been abandoned).*"[1]

The main thought here is not only of religion and Christian behavior because this work was designed to assist in the prayer life of the Brothers, but the reasoning behind it would be equally valid for secular subjects which many parents of that time could not give to their children. The teachers had to teach the children everything they needed to earn a living later. This role of "substitutes," for teachers freely chosen by the parents, or of trustees, brought with it special relationships–not those of superiors to inferiors, but of true associates in the complete education of the children. This sharing of responsibilities concerns on the one hand, the whole educational team and each of the teachers, while on the other hand, it is individualized in relation to each child and his own parents because a child is not the direct responsibility of the parents of others.

This situation had important educational consequences. La Salle held firmly to the view that each father or mother, or in their absence a guardian, should not only make people aware of the child from the moment he enrolled in the school, but even more so that each person responsible should inform the director of the school or the head teacher, in order that the group of teachers given responsibility by the parents to instruct the child and look after his education would know what would be useful for him, or have access to information that would dictate the best strategy to adopt with him: the age of the pupil, the level of study he had reached, the profession of parents and what they had in mind for the child, his natural qualities, faults to be corrected, the state of his health...

The director of the school would use this knowledge to inform himself of the manner in which the parents raised the child and their wishes. He insisted on the value of careful study at school because [along with La Salle. *Translators' note*] he was convinced that

> *"It is a practice... common with lowly paid workers and the poor simply to let their children grow up... like vagabonds who wander here and there while they cannot employ them in any useful way... being obliged to look for work away from their home, they simply leave the children to their own devices. The consequences, however, are disastrous because the children, grown accustomed to a life of idleness for several years, have a good deal of trouble settling down to work. In addition, they develop bad habits since they often mix with evil company."* [2]

Parents were asked to cooperate with the teachers by not listening willingly to the complaints and stories that their children might have regarding their school

companions or the teachers, but if the need should arise, to check with the teachers as to the actual state of affairs. They were asked to **check the neatness** of their children, to make sure they were dressed properly, were not bare-legged and that they didn't throw snowballs in the streets in the winter time and that they did not have money at school: "this being one of the principal reasons for disorderly conduct."[3] The condition for a real spirit of comradeship at school where rich and poor were side by side was assuredly that no question of money whether in the school or near-school environment should increase the feelings of inequality which were already evidenced by the clothes the children wore. The daily allocation of points as a reward for good pupil responses was an excellent method of letting the parents know about the work of their children. The changing of level in the various subjects on the curriculum each month gave them another method of evaluating the progress made at school.

Particular notice was taken by the teachers of the pupils' **application** at school. Pupils named as **visitors of absentees** enabled the teachers to check with families as to the reasons for absence from school. When such an absence was for a long period the children were asked "several times" by the Inspector or the Director to reflect on how important it was to be diligent in attendance at school, and that a child who was absent three or four times without a serious reason could be sent away from the school to ensure that this bad example would not influence others. To avoid matters getting to this point, the Lasallian teacher was urged to "speak to the parents." He would exert every effort to make them understand "the obligation they had to ensure the education of their children and the wrong they were doing them" by not encouraging them to "learn to read and write" because if they were ignorant they would become "hardly capable of ever being suited for any employment." A letter set out the reason for this step: it was a matter of making sure they understood "how important it was for a worker to be able to read and write because, no matter how little a person knew, if he could read and write, he could do anything."

Another means was put forward. As the very poor families were ordinarily enrolled on the parish registers as persons to receive alms, it fitted in with the custom of the time to "ensure that the parish priests arranged for them to receive no alms" when "they did not send their children to school."[4]

It was a question of encouraging the children to like school "by every possible means" such as **congratulations** for their progress, or getting them to share in responsibility by confiding some office to them... Thus, with the children of the poor who usually did not do anything "except what they wanted to do" and their parents "spoiling them," it would suffice for the children to want "to go to school for the parents to be happy to send them there."[5]

Even corrections were not to upset the children. To understand the Lasallian way of thinking in this connection, it is necessary to realize that the word "correction" was not applied only in the physical sense, but also meant "correction by means of words" and "other means" left to the discretion of the teachers. It happened that

some parents prohibited any corporal correction for their children, and even other forms of sanction or punishment. In such cases, it was better to avoid corrections of this type and to find some other means. If that did not suffice to modify the behavior of the pupils, it was better to terminate their enrollment but only after trying, with the help of the parents, a style of correction that would achieve the desired results.[6]

2. The children, through the school, instruct their parents

The Christian school could cause certain apprehensions to form in the minds of some parents. Since the school aimed to prepare the pupils for their adult life, it must, particularly in religion classes, advise against certain types of conduct which the children saw either in the bosom of their family or among their close relatives. The **obligations of parents** towards each other and towards their children formed an integral part of the teaching of the Church and this could not be passed over in silence. Whether the teacher spoke of this in telling stories of lives of exemplary people, or in explaining the duties of a Christian, the matter remained delicate because the child of a dysfunctional family should be led to love his father and mother **without judging them** and to see in certain of their corrections, which might be felt as excessive or even unjust, the outward signs of a love, however unfortunately expressed, which wanted only the best for the children.

The **Christian maxims** which were used as models in the writing classes came into the families, thanks to the fact that the children took them home from school each day. They portrayed in great measure a humanitarian and cultural ideal, and moral and social values which the parents, even the illiterate ones, enjoyed hearing their children read aloud. When the children prepared at home the reading they would do in class the next day, either as a short speech on *The Duties of a Christian*, or on the *Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility*, they shared with their parents a sort of religious formation and a gesture of good behavior.

Here are some quotations from the *Rules of Good Conduct* :

> *"It is impolite to wipe one's nose with the fingers and then clean them on one's clothes... which should always be clean no matter how poor they are since they are the adornments of a servant of God."*[7]
>
> *"When someone sneezes you should not say in a loud voice: God bless you or God help you."*[8]
>
> *"Children should not go to bed without saying goodnight to their parents."*[9]
>
> *"One should follow the custom of the area as closely as possible and follow the style of dress of persons of one's condition and age".*[10]
>
> *"It is contrary to good behavior and it seems rather boorish to offer a drink to people who come to visit and to urge them to drink,*

except in the case of someone who arrives from the country... who would need some refreshment."[11]

"Good behavior demands that before a meal one should wash one's hands and bless the food... When there is a child present, it often happens that such a person is given this task."[12]

"Children especially should make it a rule to be the last to start and the first to finish a meal... Children should always leave the table first, excusing themselves appropriately."[13]

"Street theaters run by performers are regarded as unacceptable by good people... and it is usually the lower classes and the poor who patronize them... It is unbecoming for a Christian to be present at puppet shows in which there are quite indecent postures and movements... Parents should inspire in their children a horror of these shows and never allow them to be present at them."[14]

"Improper expressions that are not good French are particularly to be avoided. Children should always avoid vulgar expressions."[15] *For example, it would be speaking crudely to say, "Drag that nag out of the stable," rather than, "Bring the horse out of the stable, please."*

The whole work could be quoted because it constitutes a real treatise on politeness and good manners which conform to styles of behavior that were recognized as "upright" and "Christian" by people who were well-bred and respectable **at that time.** When Brother Timothy, Superior General, brought out the edition of 1729, he was at pains to point out the extent to which the success of previous editions demonstrated their usefulness for a whole host of adults at all social levels, not just for the parents of children who attended the free schools. He wrote :

" No sooner had (this book) appeared than everyone wanted to have it and supplies were exhausted in such a short time (that its author) was obliged to have it reprinted up to three times during his own lifetime."[16]

In the sphere of religious knowledge, the same can be said for passages in the *Duties of a Christian,* which also ran to several editions in the lifetime of the author. It answered the needs not only of teaching children to read connected prose, but also of getting the parents to participate in moral and religious teachings adapted to the needs of adults more than to those of children in elementary school. Dialogue between school and parents thus went on daily by means of the books which the children took home with them.

After having emphasized the importance of the relationship between school and parents, the Lasallian style of education placed particular importance on what has been called "the twelve virtues of a good teacher."

NOTES

1. CL 13, p.9. The word " substitute" in the 17th century usage signifies persons that today we would designate as "proxies" that is to say, acting in the name of another. But the word (proxy) at that time signified only those who had power delegated by the Pope to act in his name (Richelet, and Furetière). La Salle could not use it speaking of parents but today this is the best word to translate his thought.
2. CL 13, p. 12.
3. CL 24, p. 258.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 187. Cf. later, Appendix 1 about "sending children to school."
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 186-191.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 165.
7. CL 19, p. 22.
8. *Ibid.* p. 24.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 84.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 228.
16. *Ibid.*, p. vi.

Chapter Two

THE TWELVE VIRTUES OF A GOOD TEACHER[1]

In his *Collection for the use of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, La Salle enumerated "*twelve virtues of a good teacher.*" Likewise, he contented himself with naming Saint Bernard's *Nine fruits of the religious life*, the *Four interior supports of the society of the Brothers*, the *four exterior supports*, and the *Ten commandments that the Brothers... must always keep in mind to meditate on, and in their hearts to practice.* Among these, there was one which recommended, with regard to the students, to "**teach very well and gratuitously.**" He also listed *Ten qualities correction should have in order to be fruitful*. These ten qualities were more or less developed in the *Conduct of Schools*.

With regard to the *Twelve virtues of a good Teacher*, Brother Agathon (1731-1798), Superior General, published a commentary on them, in order to complete the *Conduct of Schools* and the *Collection*. This edition made available to the public some of the principles and methods which the Brothers had been using over many years. It validated them, not only by theoretical considerations taken from the writings of Charles Rollin (1661-1741), a well known professor at the Royal College which was the predecessor of the present-day College of France, but above all by the experience of teachers in schools for the people.

Brother Agathon wrote in his *Foreword*: "The plan for this work comes from M. de La Salle, our venerable founder. We have elaborated on his principles and maxims, and what we have used from other sources has been drawn from the best regarded authors."

This book explaining the twelve virtues of a good teacher is a treasure-house of Lasallian pedagogy; or even, as many think, of universal pedagogy. For example, in the 19th century it was so highly regarded that it was translated into Spanish in 1869 by a professor at the Teachers' College in Valladolid, who published it eight years before the Brothers arrived in that country (1877).[2]

1. Gravity and silence

The first two "virtues of a good teacher" are concerned with the body in general, and then the spoken word. The general attitude of the teacher, his seriousness, the sobriety of his movements and language should not lead the pupils to laugh at him.

The work in which the pupils improved their reading skills—*The Rules of Christian decorum and civility*—was used in such a way that the children could not

find cause to criticize any unbecoming demeanor to which their teacher might be prone. The teacher "has a confident look... never laughs while speaking, and does not twist his face around... doesn't say much... is neither sharp and cutting, nor haughty." This does not prevent him from showing "goodness, nor a deep affection." He strives to be respected rather than feared, avoiding "negligent attitudes" as much as "a gravity taken too far" which "would make him look silly." A "brooding countenance," "jokes to make them laugh," an affected tone of voice and banging on the table "to shock them or scare them" are all to be avoided.

"Silence" does not mean a complete absence of words, but rather **discretion** in the use of the voice. It is more useful to show them than to explain. To question, to ask the students to explain, gives them an opportunity to progress from simply knowing something to being able to communicate it.

"Silence produces order and absence of tension in class," and so sets the stage for progress. Its importance in the 17th and 18th centuries was much greater because of the stuffy atmosphere in the classrooms. This was caused by the great number of pupils in the same room and the arrangements made for them fell far below the sanitary requirements of the present day. As a result, respiratory ailments among the teachers were frequent and often fatal.

Silence was also enjoined because "teachers who speak often are rarely listened to." Instead, the *signals* recommended in the *Conduct of schools* in order to avoid speaking even single words, or at other times long phrases, allowed the teacher both to "regain the attention of the class" without disturbance and "let them know what they have to do." When words are rare, it is easier to think; and such words as used have greater weight.

2. Humility, prudence and wisdom

After the comportment of the body, gestures and words, come qualities of the soul and the heart.

Humility, the opposite of pride, makes the teacher sympathetic and approachable. It makes the teacher attached to his students without letting him forget that he has been entrusted by their parents and by God with the task of directing them in the best secular and Christian ways.

It is inspired by the words of Christ: "Unless you become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." The Christian teacher does not make his students perform services which are "low and despicable" which he can do for himself. "Humility goes with modesty": the teacher is not aiming for a higher rank on the social scale than that which comes from teaching. He believes himself "highly honored to work for the salvation of souls." If he is highly educated, "he does not despise" those who are less so. If he is successful as a teacher, he takes no credit for this. but attributes to his students all the merit due to them for their efforts.

He has "no jealousy,' and is happy to see his colleagues' success; not deterred by his own failures, he makes every effort to remedy them. His humility leads him

to ask for advice, and to follow the suggestions of those his Institute appoints to help him: the Inspector, his Director and the Visitor. His methods are conformed to those in use in his school so that his students will have no trouble transferring from his class to another.

Humility makes it easy for him to share his knowledge with less gifted children, although this may be less glamorous than expanding his own wisdom or producing young geniuses.

Prudence is the good habit of making wise choices. It enlightens the teacher in every circumstance, on the best means to use to educate the students as far as they are capable. As each choice comes up, it evaluates the consequences for their minds and hearts, without forgetting the corporal and social consequences. It avoids using dangerous and untried methods. It calls on the **memory** to profit from past experiences, the **intelligence** to foresee the consequences and the students' reactions, and courage to use every means at his disposal in preparing his lessons, and his feeling for adapting to the circumstances and differing characters of his pupils. It avoids unseemly haste but also too much innovation, as well as a selfish form of prudence which would consider only his own needs, forgetting what would be of greater use to the children.

Wisdom is different from prudence in the sense that it examines especially the ends that prudence is pursuing... It ranks them in order to give priority to those that are excellent. Wisdom causes the teacher to learn well beforehand whatever he is going to teach. It requires him to practice himself the **human** and **Christian** virtues he recommends to his pupils. The wisdom of a Christian teacher is inspired by the Gospel, which reverses the scale of values as in the beatitudes: separation from wealth is a source of happiness when it is put to the service of God and of neighbor; if one is persecuted for the sake of justice, one will have the joy of remaining faithful to God; God esteems highly those occupations which are of least value in the eyes of men; supernatural goods, which give assurance of eternal life, are more important than temporal success, and so on.

3. Patience, reserve and kindness

Mastery over temperament and passions, instincts and humors, depends on one's will; but one needs to realize that certain temperaments are so impulsive or violent or sensual that they cannot easily be adapted to the wonderful work of a Christian educator.

In the first place, a great deal of **patience** is needed, especially with students who get little cultural background from their parents, or those students with limited intelligence, or with a rebellious disposition, always ready to "play the fool" as they say themselves.

Patience overcomes suffering and difficulties. It stops one from being too hasty and makes one think of what he is doing. When it meets insult or criticism, it

does not react too strongly. The patient teacher is not put out by the jokes or bad manners of the pupils or their parents. He is prepared to **go over the work repeatedly** for them to learn. So gradually, the students acquire right ideas, and good actions become customary for them. When they need to be corrected, patience avoids over-doing it.

Reserve, like patience, requires moderation, but it precedes actions rather than following them. It avoids excess in everything, measuring exactly what the students need in a particular class at a given time.

It takes into account the weaknesses of the students, the reduced amount of time they have, and the conditions under which they live at home. It safeguards modesty by avoiding all familiarity with the students, every unnecessary touch, and all brutal correction. "As reserve in thought produces reserve in word and action, it is important to learn how to think properly, that is, to reflect... and judge rightly." His reserve produces the good example that a teacher should give his students. It makes him avoid whatever would be offensive to their eyes, their ears and their sensitivity.

Gentleness engenders tenderness without mawkishness. This comes from the example of Christ: "Learn from me that I am meek and humble of heart." It engages the friendship of the scholars while inspiring proper respect. It produces charming manners and goodwill towards the least estimable. It makes the teacher avoid authoritarian commands given in a displeasing tone of voice. After giving punishment, the teacher removes the bitter feelings which may arise in the pupil by getting him to understand that it was given because the teacher wanted to help the child improve himself. When a difficulty arises, the child is given time to explain or to ask for clarification. When a child is successful, gentleness is not sparing of praise and encouragement, while making sure it does not engender vanity in the recipient. Remarks expressed kindly will always add to one's education in politeness, upright and Christian manners.

In his treatment of gentleness, Brother Agathon points out how to develop the **heart**, the **mind**, and the **judgment** of the pupils. He stresses the ways to avoid harshness and to be kind while punishing. **Punishments**, actually, "do less to correct than does the way it is administered." They "brutalize the mind" when they are excessive. They should not just be given because the teacher has decided to. The good of the child, the will of God who alone can permit or forbid without need for any other reason than Himself, what will happen as a consequence, the effect on the parents—all must be taken into account.

Real gentleness is akin to strength and courage because it must be consistent and the same for all. For example: "When a teacher comes to a class for the first time, the first concern of a pupil... is to study and try out the new teacher to find some weakness, if he has one, and to profit from it; when he sees, on the contrary, that the teacher confounds his tricks peacefully and silently... with a gentle, reasonable firmness, the pupil gives in and applies himself to his work."

About fifteen pages on gentleness during corrections follow. The main conditions for efficacious correction which were simply listed by Saint John- Baptist

de La Salle in his *Collection* are commented on at length. Corporal punishments were forbidden because a good teacher "would not allow himself to punish with a rod or a whip." When pupils are exceptionally disobedient, and take no notice of any corrections other than corporal punishment, "the wisest thing to do... is to send them home to their parents." By showing that he is decisive and resolute, the teacher does not have to use such means. He inspires in his pupils a shame for their faults, giving them a motive not to slide back into them. His kindness sometimes causes him to **pardon small faults**. It does not allow him to administer surprise punishments. It reminds him that the *Conduct of schools* forbids all forms of punishment during the catechism lesson, as a connection between religion and punishment could only have unfortunate results. One must always avoid threats which cannot be carried out. It is better to restrict oneself to warning and reprimanding when necessary, as threatening without carrying out the promise is the ruin of all authority. The use of rewards, good points, signs of esteem, and congratulations, often make punishments unnecessary.

When correction becomes necessary, seven conditions are to be observed on the part of the teacher: it must be with a view to the student's good; charitable, that is to say administered out of a sense of good will; just or deserved; proportionate to the age and character of the child; always moderate; calm and prudent.

On the part of those who receive correction three conditions are required: it must be accepted voluntarily; received respectfully, and submitted to or carried out in silence.

Nevertheless, it is quite permissible at times for the teacher to show his anger with regard to conduct that is particularly irregular or immoral and in this way to indicate just how much the Christian teacher detests anything that is displeasing to God. To justify this indignation the example of Christ driving the buyers from the Temple can be cited.

4. Zeal, piety, vigilance and generosity

"**Zeal** is a virtue which impels us to seek the glory of God with great affection." The zealous master teaches first of all by the **good example** of an irreproachable Christian life. Pointing out the road to follow would be valueless if good example were not to accompany it. Zeal presupposes **ardor**, action, and concern not to neglect useful means to secure the improvement of students.

The teaching of secular subjects is part of the Christian teacher's professional duty, of the responsibility he holds from God and from the will of parents. In the same way, school work is for the pupil **the duty of his state of life** and the will of God and thereby the natural way for him to prepare... for his future happiness.

A true zeal will require of a teacher serious preparation, an ongoing desire to improve himself, a most careful organization of his lessons, an ever-ready ability

to advance from theory to practice in order to provide students with the opportunity to freely commit themselves to some acts of virtue. He is, according to St. Bernard, "animated by charity, enlightened by knowledge, strengthened by constancy; he is fervent, circumspect and intrepid; he is neither half-hearted, indiscreet, nor timid."

Piety is an extension of zeal in the sense that it inclines teachers and pupils to carry out fully their duties to God. The teacher whose piety is nothing but a facade is a hypocrite and a student is not slow to discover this to his great scandal.

For the teacher, two matters of priority in Christian schools are thinking and acting in a Christian manner for he cannot truly present the Gospel message except on these two conditions. His piety will induce him to add to these conditions the art of communicating, in a pleasant way and in a manner suited to his class, those moral and religious truths that a genuine Christian culture cannot ignore. It is at this stage that formation in prayer, which is of value only in so far as pupils come to it willingly, finds its place.

Vigilance obliges a teacher to be watchful in regard to all his actions, all his words, and never to be unaware of what his pupils are doing. In other words, the Lasallian teacher is the guardian angel of his pupils. He is the watchman who prevents accidents much more than an "overseer" on the look out for faults to punish.

Vigilance avoids having to inflict punishment. It finds opportunities to **encourage**, to praise, to reward, to stimulate, even to invent.

Generosity or devotion, is a virtue "which makes us sacrifice willingly our own personal interests for those of our neighbor." It has an element of the heroic about it. Each time that it can be of advantage to his pupils, the good teacher sets aside his own interests. He goes beyond what he is contracted to do. This generosity is in evidence chiefly in teaching children. For a Brother of the Christian Schools, it means consecration to God in a religious congregation dedicated to teaching in such a way as to profit by the sharing of pedagogical and pastoral expertise that is implied by the term "by association." If he gives up having a family, it is certainly in order that he may be totally available for the service of God and of children, but also because a community's life-style allows him to welcome, at a lesser cost, children who are not so well off, and enables him to give them more time. If La Salle asked his teachers not to ambition the priesthood, as we have seen, it was so that nothing might distance them from their mission which was both sacred and profane. Such teachers take on positions commonly seen as somewhat inglorious, but they devote all their energy to them so as to practice this maxim. "One can never know too much when teaching the lowliest." The generous teacher is sparing neither of difficulties nor of time. He accepts no presents from scholars. He is not on the look-out for praise or for any personal gain whatsoever, but seeks only "what is useful for his neighbor, his own sanctification and the glory of God."

In his "conclusion," Brother Agathon who finished his book at the Mother-House of the Brothers, then at Melun, on 12th February 1785, set out the principal ideas found in his conferences on teaching, adding "the four chief means that the most skillful teachers employ to achieve success in the education of children,

knowledge, respect, love and fear" are all included in the "twelve virtues of a good teacher." There is not a single one of these twelve virtues which does not suppose the implementation of several of the above means. So much is this the case that he who has these virtues is indeed an outstanding teacher.

Lasallian pedagogy did not confine itself to developing the qualities necessary for good teachers; it furnished them likewise with **manuals** of which the most outstanding characteristic was undoubtedly to consider everything with a "spirit of faith," that is to say, to never judge by appearances only but to try and see things as God sees them so that the secular domain merges with what is specifically religious.[3]

NOTES

1. Instead of the original edition of 1785, I am using that of 1834 which is identical to it, because at the end is an alphabetical index which is very useful for research into the elements of pedagogy which are analyzed in it. Added to it with separate pagination from i to xii, are "Notes on how to teach catechism." These "Notes" do not come from La Salle, as they were addressed to parish priests to show them how important this work was, before suggesting certain methods for all catechists to use.
2. G. Rigault, volume II, p. 589.
3. CL15, p. 41.

Chapter Three

THE BALANCE BETWEEN THE SACRED AND THE SECULAR IN LASALLIAN TEXTBOOKS

La Salle did not feel that any of the texts of teaching theory current during his time were satisfactory. He wrote and published a complete set intended for the teachers in his schools. His Institute was recognized by neither Church nor State in any official way until after his death for a variety of reasons, among which was the fact that it consisted of only about a hundred teachers who were involved in about twenty places. So, he was in no position to underwrite the costs of printing unless others besides the Brothers could use them.

Thus, it was that neither the *Conduct of Schools* nor the *Meditations on Employment* were published while he was alive. If an important edition of his *Collection of Various Short Treatises,* approved in Avignon from 1705 onwards appeared in 1711,[1] this was because it was needed by the novices, and by the Brothers, who were still waiting for the publication of their *Common Rule*, which remained in manuscript form until 1726.

The French manuscript number 21 939 in the National Library in Paris indicates the existence of the *Instructions and Exercises of Piety* by de La Salle, "by simple permission to the author for five years from 23rd January 1703."[2] Each volume is carefully described. Two of them treat of secular matters and seven of religious ones.

Secular Publications:

— *French syllabary*, 72 pages, printed in Paris in 1698 without permission.
— *Christian Politeness*, in small octavo with 258 pages printed with a Gothic font. The exact title is: *Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility.*

Religious Publications for use in School:

— *Exercises of Piety*, 88 pages, approved 21 March 1696 by M. de Précelles.
— *Explanation and Prayers for Holy Mass*, 152 pages, approved 16 January 1698 by M. de Précelles.
— *Step-by-Step Explanation of How to Prepare for Confession.*
— Explanations and Prayers for Confession and Communion.

— *Christian Instructions,* or *The Duties of a Christian Towards God, and How to Carry them out Properly* in continuous prose.
— Catechism of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, or *The Duties of a Christian Towards God in Question and Answer Form.*
— Two abridgments of the Catechism just mentioned, one in duodecimo and the other in sixteenmo: *Longer Abridgment of the Duties of a Christian Towards God,* and *Smaller Abridgment of the Duties of a Christian Towards God.* The *Longer Abridgment* was scarcely cut down at all (128 pages) while the *Smaller Abridgment* was reduced to 35 pages.[3]

Actually, a third publication completed this set, but rather than something he wrote himself, it was borrowed from various musicians: *Spiritual Hymns.*[4]

1. The choice of non-clerical reading texts

When Louis XIV was alive, the parish priests' little schools or those of the diocesan directors who were "*chantres*" of their cathedrals taught reading in Latin before doing so in French for two reasons: to allow the readers to follow the Mass in a missal; and, to know the common prayers which were usually said in Latin. The reading of the **Church language** seemed to be essential, not only for Altar servers but also for all the faithful, because for entry into a college at the age of nine, a prior knowledge of Greek and Latin was required, as the syllabus was based on the study of Greek and Latin writers.

So, the custom then in the little schools of the fee -charging teachers, as in those of the Writing Masters and the charity schools organized by the parishes or the *Poor Committee* of the General Hospital, was to use the Latin of the common prayers as a basis for teaching reading. The first syllables pronounced were parts of Latin words. French came only later. The pedagogical principle was to proceed from the known (Latin prayers) to the unknown (reading). For *The Parish School* of 1654, after the alphabet and the syllables "ba, bi... bra, bre, bri...", there had to be "in the same book the *Pater, Ave* and *Credo.*"[5] Démia did not want the children "starting to read in French until they were able to do so in Latin."[6] When he wanted someone to spell, he chose as an example a Latin word "Domine," which is pronounced as dominé and is spelled [in French] D (dé) o: do; m (ème) i: mi; n (ène), e (é): ne (né). It is hard to see how identifying the letters by their French names helps the Latin syllabification, but that is evidently what it does, as *Domine*, meaning Lord, is pronounced *Dominé*.

After *Domine*, comes the *In nomine Patris*, the beginning of the *Sign of the Cross* in Latin, which Démia takes as an example. Thus, he makes a discreet reference to a well-established custom of placing this *cross in God's name* on the title page of certain *Alphabets* or *Alphabetaries*. Next came *Sanctificetur*,[7] taken from the basic Christian prayer, the *Pater Noster*. For continuous reading in Latin, Démia

used the *Psalms*, an essentially religious work with a widely different vocabulary from that of normal conversation.

When it came to reading in French, Démia gave his pupils:*Thoughts for a Christian*, Saint Francis de Sales' *Introduction to the Devout Life, The Pedagogue* or *Trumpets in the Sky*, the *Catechism for Schools* and finally *Politeness* or other books."[8] As we can see, apart from the *Politeness* which came last, reading was learnt but using religious books which, of course, had an essentially dogmatic, moral, cultic or pious vocabulary.

Since La Salle usually had to teach the children of poor families who did not normally send them on to college, and as his aim was not to train altar servers, he overturned tradition and started his students reading French before teaching them to read the *Psalms* in Latin. For this purpose he published in 1698 a *French syllabary* which did not contain the *Pater, Ave, Credo* or *Confiteor* which they did not need to be able to read, but various syllables and words chosen according to the principles of a *Treatise on French pronunciation* which was referred to in his *Management of Schools*.[9]Although no copy of the first edition of the *Syllabary* has come down to us, its main contents can be worked out.

Firstly, we should realize that his originality was not absolute by any means. In 1609 Pierre Le Gaignard, the tutor to the La Boulaye family, had published an *Aprenmolire françois* to help teachers. With the 114 pages of French in his book called *Alphabets françoys, latin et grec*, Jean Behourt, Principal of the Collège des Bons Enfants in **Rouen** brought us to that town where, about thirty years later, **Nyel** was to teach the children of the poor at the Hospital and in the four quarters of the town.

This author justifies his method by stating that to teach "everything in French" results in "speedier understanding." According to custom, the common prayers were used as a text for reading. There was only one edition, since the book was published specifically for young Prince Henry of Lorraine (1620). **Comenius'** campaign in favor of the mother tongue was used in Protestant propaganda in favor of reading the Bible in the vernacular, thus keeping its religious flavor. As noted above, the justification for this method came from the statement: "To learn Latin before your mother tongue is like trying to ride a horse before you can walk ." We can recall here the previously mentioned custom of Port-Royal, as their "Little Schools,"so called because of the small number of enrollments, had nothing in common with the needs of the poor.[10] Other authors like Irson, Le Soyeur, Lartigaut, Le Laboureur, Charpentier (between 1656 and 1683) upheld the primacy of French, and so were counted among the *Moderns* in the widespread dispute with the supporters of the *Ancients*.

The climax of the dispute between the **syllabaries** occurred between 1688 and 1703. La Salle was induced to defend his method, for it was attacked, not only by the Writing Masters and the Masters of the Little Schools of the parish of Saint-Sulpice in Paris, but also by the Bishop of Chartres, Paul Godet des Marais. Having introduced the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* into his episcopal town in 1699,

he wanted, subsequently, to have a say in their organization. However, he quickly accepted La Salle's reasons why the boys should learn to read French first, although the girls in his Christian schools continued to use Latin as their first medium for reading. La Salle s biographer, Blain, has recorded his arguments for us:

- Reading French had a greater and more widespread use than reading Latin.
- French came naturally to children, and it was easier for them to learn than Latin because they understood it, but they did not know what the Latin words meant.
- So it took far less time for them to learn to read French rather than Latin.
- When they could spell and read properly in French, reading in Latin required "stressing all the syllables and pronouncing the words well," whereas it took a long time to learn to read French after having first learned to read Latin.
- When the meaning of the words is not known, it is hard to maintain interest, to remember the syllables, and to want to be able to spell them.
- What use could Latin possibly be to people who "will never use it all their lives"? Nuns who said the Divine Office in Latin "do really need to be able to read well," but of every hundred girls who came to the Christian and gratuitous schools, there would hardly be one who could possibly become a choir nun in a monastery. In the same way, of a hundred boys in the Brothers' schools, should there be any who might study Latin in later life, "must they be accommodated at the expense of the rest"?
- "Experience teaches that "those who attend the Christian schools do not stay long enough to be able to learn to read Latin and French." As soon as they are old enough to work, "they are withdrawn" because they have to earn their living. If they start with Latin "they will only be able to read Latin imperfectly and will quickly forget whatever they know." So they will end up never knowing how "to read Latin, nor French."
- When they start with French, the youngsters will at least know how to "read it well when they leave school"; they could "even teach themselves Christian doctrine" by using printed catechisms; they "can keep Sundays and feast days holy by reading good books and well written prayers in French."
- Experience shows "that nearly all those who do not understand Latin," and especially "the poor, who come to the Christian and gratuitous school," inspire pity when they read it to those who understand this language. So it is useless to spend a great deal of time teaching to read a language well to people who will never use it.[11]

As we can see, most of the arguments are based on both the experience gained from a number of schools in a number of towns, at least from 1680 to 1699, and on deeply thought-out principles. La Salle was not interested in using the gratuitous school to produce altar boys for the parish church or the cathedral. His

pedagogical principles were first of all at the service of poor children who would only go to school for a few years. His determination not to handicap the poorer ones for the sake of families in better circumstances sprang from his implicit desire to use the school as a means of raising the social status of the disadvantaged to a less rudimentary cultural level. He intended to provide them with the opportunity continuing after they left school, the reading of books printed in French–religious ones, certainly—but other types as well. As his arguments on this occasion were directed to the Bishop of Chartres, La Salle did not go into the professional and administrative advantages of a reasonably developed capacity to read French.[12]

The inherent right to secular education paralleling the acquisition of religious knowledge had already been touched on in this long apologia. It also refers to certain features of La Salle's *Syllabary*. While similar traditional works looked to prepare children for reading the official language of the Church and the Christian prayers in Latin when it was unthinkable that Mass and Vespers could ever be celebrated except in Latin, J-B de La Salle's *French Syllabary* looked in the first place to the immediate, daily, social utility: to start with the reading of the mother tongue without worrying unduly about the requirements of the religious offices.

This *Syllabary* was complemented, after eight months spent learning it, by a **first reader** which usually took until the end of the scholastic year.[13]This book was described in the *Management of Schools* (both the 1706 manuscript and the edition published in 1720), as "continuous prose" without requiring that it should resemble, for example, the *Duties of a Christian* in "continuous prose" published in 1703. On the contrary, the reading passages provided in it with reference to certain words taken from this "First Book" are secular rather than sacred: *nobody. magnifying glass* (with obsolete spelling), *point. you will have*[14]... That a saint introduces this kind of "*secularization*" into the initiation of children into reading, and that Religious, the *Brothers of the Christian Schools*, set out to propagate it, is probably more remarkable than the mere substitution of French for Latin. This introduces an important principle into his pedagogy: that of the autonomy, if not the absolute independence, of the secular in a life view which is, nevertheless, deeply religious.

This integration of sacred and secular is particularly noticeable in the *Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility.*

2. The secular and Christian role of the book on politeness

There have been so many apocryphal editions of the *Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility* that I have kept, by preference, to the 1703 edition which was supervized by the author. The only known copy of this was not discovered until 1960. It is kept in Rome at the Archives of the *Brothers of the Christian Schools.*

In the programs of the Lasallian schools, this *Decorum* book came after two other books: a book of Christian instruction used to distinguish various syllables; and another volume whose choice was left to the Director of the school, and did not

need to be of a religious nature,[15] then the *Psalter*, which was used to introduce reading in Latin. Children who went regularly to the parish church for Vespers were already familiar with the sound of the Psalms in Latin. They started only later on *Decorum* having passed through the successive stages of "beginners," "middle" and "advanced" in each book they read. At the same time, they began **writing**.[16]

Decorum was written in Gothic script, which was harder to read than the ordinary letters. This killed two birds with one stone. One was to uplift the hearts of the children, using maxims about their duties towards their parents and their state of life, while at the same time it led them to a more difficult type of secular reading– that of "papers or documents written by hand," such as "writs of summonses, receipts and commitments to buy or sell." Being careful to progress gradually in his task, the teacher first used texts which were easy to read, then took the "advanced" ones as far as reading "the most difficult writing."[17]

The idea of **social** and professional **usefulness** was the reason for this meticulous organization.

La Salle expressed perfectly in his *Preface*, his reasons for composing this treatise on politeness. He pointed out that whatever affected the external behavior of children and adults in the secular domain had some point of reference to God, since, for a Christian, his moral life and his ways of behaving were only good to the extent that they were in accord with the law of God, either natural or supernatural. It was a matter of virtue, and even "Christian virtue," rather than a mere ethic required by society, to use modern terminology:

> *"It is surprising that most Christians do not look on* **good behavior** *and* **politeness** *as anything but a merely human and worldly thing, and that, not thinking of raising their minds to things above, they do not consider it as a virtue with regard to God, their neighbor or themselves. This shows how little Christianity there is in the world, and how few people there are who live and conduct themselves in accordance with the spirit of Jesus Christ."*[18]

La Salle insisted on raising the worth of human virtue which is inherent in politeness, because, for him, everything in existence, being created by God, deserved consideration and respect. It is right to claim, in the language of today, that all created things share the dignity of its creator and deserve appropriate treatment. So he wrote: "All our external activities, which are the only ones that can be influenced by politeness, must always possess and manifest the nature of a virtue." Parents and schoolteachers both need to take note of this. But this human virtue, which by its nature is also Christian, will only become truly Christian if it is consciously referred to God. **Secular life referred to God** means that what is secular is to be enlivened by the spirit of faith, that characteristic of both Lasallian pedagogy and the Institute of the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* as defined in the first chapter of the *Common Rules*. From it there comes, for Christian teachers, a specific originality in all their

dealings with their students. Far from telling their pupils "that if they do not do such-and-such a thing" they will be blamed, scorned, ridiculed by the world, the teachers were to lead them to see that God's presence required them to be modest in demeanor, to render to all the politeness due to them as being animated by the Holy Spirit and members of the body of Jesus Christ, since God was honored when we honor our neighbor.

> *"Fathers and mothers... far from telling the children for whom they are responsible that if they do such-and-such a thing, they will be blamed, and no one will like them, people will laugh at them... when they want them to adopt exterior practices regarding bodily welfare... will take care to motivate them through the presence of God.... If they teach them and get them to practice politeness to their neighbor, they will teach them always to treat people with politeness and respect as the members of Jesus Christ."*

La Salle's explanation was that without this intentional reference to God, the motives given for requiring certain modes of conduct from the children "are only good for inspiring them with the spirit of the world" making them vain, self-satisfied and egotistic.

One of the marks of this secular pedagogy is that it is neither sectarian nor revolutionary. It contains many nuances and so allows the children to develop a feeling for nuances and diversity. La Salle wrote:

> *"We should* **be aware of the times** *in practices of good behavior and politeness, for many of them have been practiced for many centuries... but are no longer in use, and anyone who wanted to use them today would be regarded as rather peculiar"...*
>
> *"Each country has its own customs... So what is felt to be shameful in one place is regarded as right and proper in another. There are even things required by good breeding in some places which are completely forbidden elsewhere... In the same way,you should behave differently at home and abroad.... You need to be aware of yourself... because one who is socially inferior to others must defer to those who are superior to them either by their birth, their office, or their quality."*[19]

As a result, the *Rules of Decorum* consists of two parts which appear to be completely secular: 1—Care for different parts of the body, 2—Marks of respect or affection to be paid to various people we come in contact with in our life.[20]

This time, while the requirements of Christianity are not neglected, this reading concentrated on the manners of "quality society." La Bruyère had published *Characters or current manners* in order to mock the inanities of his social circle.

La Salle, while not omitting completely certain failings noticed among young and old in the lower classes, prefers to describe what he considers **good taste**, not that of worldlings or fashion leaders, but what most Christians who try to follow the counsels commonly given by parents and clergy of the upper middle classes would approve. He does make mention of the "great," people in authority and what service we owe them, but this is only so that his students can.meet them without feeling uneasy or being thought uncouth.

What he tried to do was to make them feel at ease. not embarrassed, in their behavior, without worldly vanity or a haughty attitude towards those said to be "well born" or considered important. As this book was used at home by the students in preparing for the next day's recitation, this allowed their families to acquire an ease of manner in dealing with cultured people.

Politeness, good behavior, familiarity with forms of good breeding, and manners are counted as "Christian virtues" because they are inspired in the main by love of God and of our neighbor. For a Christian, respect for God requires respect for ourselves and for our neighbor. Apart from this religious perspective, this way of looking at things is like that of Jules Ferry who proposed lessons in morality. politeness and civic duties to be taught in State Schools.

3. Books of Christian instruction and the religious climate of the school

The autonomy given to secular concerns in no way stopped Lasallian schools from being steeped in **references to God** from morning till night. Its pedagogy was not one of fear. The word "fear" only occurs six times in the *Management of Schools*: the teacher should *fear* to overburden the children's minds with too much detail; parents bring up their children too unrestrainedly for "*fear* of troubling them"; children naturally "*fear* punishment"; you should *fear* to read too fast; it would be better only to correct students who are often at fault without wasting time with those for whom the *fear* of punishment is enough. In only one case is *fear* mentioned in reference to God, or rather to sin, which displeases God.[21] As for hell, it is not mentioned once in the *Conduct*. What we have here is truly a **pedagogy of love**, for God and for others. In both cases ,everything which could be disagreeable to God or others is to be avoided. The pupils must be aware that they have deserved their punishments and see them as a positive **help** for them to correct themselves, caused by the love their teachers and parents have for their spiritual and temporal welfare.

We need hardly mention the Morning and Evening prayers, attendance at daily Mass when possible, the remembrance of the presence of God at the hours and half-hours... These were essential elements in setting the tone. Their frequency of occurrence throughout the day was less resented by children of eight to ten than they would be by fifty- year old adults because time passes more slowly for them having lived only one-fifth as long. These regular breaks in the lessons were a kind of breathing space which freshened their attention.

The *Exercises of piety performed during the day in the Christian schools* first published in 1696 was used by those who could read.[22] They were a guide for the teachers, but in each school two students were appointed to lead the prayers, one for the morning and the other for the afternoon. They were chosen from those who could write and were changed about each month. It was actually a little more complicated, as the "prayer leaders" had to have "a sufficiently loud voice to be heard in all the [contiguous] classes."[23] During the year, about twenty students would take their turn to fulfill this duty. They shared the authority of the teachers and this helped them realize that every baptized Christian has an apostolic mission. "Reflections", meditations or exhortations, were prepared for each of the five days of the school week. The **prayer monitors** read them out from the handbook. Following this each teacher in his own class would explain and expand on the reflection read out for all. This initiated a real formation of judgment which was adapted to the daily life of the children.[24]

In 1698, a second small book was given to the students who could read, while the others said the rosary during the church services. This was *Instructions and Prayers for Holy Mass*. It was not intended to help altar boys to serve Mass as it contained no Latin prayers, not even the *Gloria,* the *Credo,* the *Pater Noster* nor the *Domine, non sum dignus.* The whole book was in French. Only the *Exercises of Piety* of 1696 and subsequent editions had *Main ceremonies for Mass servers* followed by *Responses for Holy Mass* in Latin. The prayers for "Holy Mass" followed whatever the priest did and tried to set the minds and hearts of the students in complete harmony with the sentiments of the liturgical prayers: humility, sorrow for sin, confidence in God, adoration, a plea for divine mercy, praise and thanksgiving, a desire to know the teachings of Christ and to put them into practice, faith in revealed truths, belief in the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the meaning of the sacrifice of Calvary, asking for the grace to avoid sin, prayers for the living and the dead, saying the *Pater Noster* in French, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, thanksgiving after Communion, or a spiritual communion, a union of heart "with those who have received Communion" for those who have not been to Communion, reading a translation of the *Gospel* of Saint John, which was read at the end of every Mass, in a simplified version the children could understand.[25]

In 1702-1703, in order to make it easier for teachers preparing their pupils for their first confession to teach the catechism, La Salle procured approval for and published *Methodical Instruction for Teaching How to Make a Good Confession, in Question and Answer Form.* "Five to seven years" said Jean-Claude Dhotel, "is the age of reason or discretion... when children are to be made to go to confession."[26] But the same author, on page 270, pointed out that preparation for the sacraments only began at seven at Saint Nicholas du Chardonnet. La Salle conformed to this practice.[27] The preface for his *Instruction* was written in a style which was aimed, judging by the evidence, at adults rather than young people. **Parents and teachers** were honored by being addressed by it. It is also possible that the priest, La Salle, with his wide experience as a confessor to people who had nothing to do with school,

was aiming at a very large audience when he wrote: "There are... so many disorders in the way confessions are made that I felt it necessary to tell *the faithful* how to confess and point out to them how to do it properly so that... they will have the right dispositions to gain from this sacrament, the graces it is meant to confer."[28] The examination of conscience distinguishes what refers to "fathers and mothers," "children," "married people," "masters and mistresses," in the sense of business owners and employers, and "servants"; showing that the work was intended for **all kinds of people** and not just for school children.

A parallel volume was published in 1703: *Instructions and Prayers for Communion*. This was a catechism in continuous prose. It was used as a reading book for advanced pupils. The prayers were evidently selected to suit young people about to leave school and go to work. The thoughts and sentiments in it are far too mature for "first communicants eight years old." It is true that many made their first communion at twelve in those days. For those, the prayers before and after communion provided spiritual nourishment quite suitable for adults as well.[29]

In all these different publications, the state of life of elementary school children was not neglected. For example: "Have I remembered God from time to time during the day? Have I offered my work and everything I do to God?... Have I shown respect to, and willingly obeyed my parents and teachers?... Have I especially loved my brothers, my sisters and all my friends?... Have I stolen anything?... Have I taken anything from its hiding-place at home?... Have I told lies... for the sake of others?... Have I missed school without permission?... Have I worked hard in school to study my lessons?... Have I listened carefully?... Have I wasted time playing (the reference is to games for money)?... Have I been to blame for others swearing, fighting, stealing, lying or missing school ... "[30]

The children were encouraged to ask themselves if they had spoken about their parents "disdainfully... if they said bad things to them or mocked them... if they had disobeyed them"... if they had made them angry... "Whether they had failed to be friendly... towards their parents"... "whether they had caused friction between some people by tale-bearing"... "whether they had been glad when something bad happened to someone"... "whether they had given way to anger"... "whether they had taken revenge."[30]

Leaving aside the questions of prayer and divine worship which are specifically religious in nature, the list above shows how these **examinations of conscience** which were suggested each day to the pupils, contributed to forming in them a sense of responsibility whether they were Catholic or Protestant, Jews or Moslems, or they had no religion. As Jules Ferry was to write at a much later date, this was a morality for all Frenchmen, accepted by all the teachers of a laicist Republic, because it agreed with the natural law, that is, with what every human being worthy of the epithet "civilized" finds deep in his conscience. The big difference between the Christian and Lasallian approach compared with that of the laicists was in the **motivation**. The aim of both types of education seemed to be the same: to form the students to do what is Good. It was the motives that were different: they

were not just "natural" or "secular," but supernatural, allied with the creator God and the Savior Christ. La Salle succinctly delineated this difference in his *Preface* to the *Duties of a Christian in continuous prose*:

> *"The ordinary virtues are called moral because they are used to regulate our conduct. This type of virtue can be practiced, at least exteriorly, by heretics and infidels as much as by true Christians... If they are special to Christians, it is only in the way of performing these actions with the grace (of God), through the movement of the Spirit of God and with a pure intention of pleasing him."*[31]

Pedagogically, it emerges from the copious supply of reflections, examens, moments of recollection, that a psychological activity making each pupil responsible for his own behavior is developed throughout the years in a Lasallian school.

Training in piety and a loving relationship with God are added to the means of moral formation in all secular systems of education. The moral life of a Lasallian student in no way resembles that of hedonists or pleasure-seekers, with the sensuality of the individual or the tendency to explain everything in terms of a state-controlled sociology, nor the other philosophical systems which use as the basis of their morality anything other than the love of God, of oneself, and of others for the love of God.

In the various lessons of reading, writing, and arithmetic only about a third of each class took part in these; but for religious instruction the whole class followed at the one time–about sixty students, according to the *Conduct*.

The method for teaching religion was also useful for many secular subjects well past the elementary level. Above all, it was **Socratic**. After explaining a truth to be remembered, it followed up with questions and sub-questions. The aim was to **get them to discover** the deepest sense of the various meaning of the words and phrases used and to proceed from there to uncover causes and consequences, the principles underlying an action, and the actions which derive from a principle. From one question to the next, it was a whole domain of knowledge which the pupils absorbed. Take for example a spiral staircase. The upward movement is in the shape of a helix like a helicopter rising vertically thanks to the propeller which whirls the air. So, the pupil starting from what he knows is led by the teacher to progress gradually from the known to the unknown. This is a fair enough description of the method used.

As the students in the one class were at three different levels of knowledge, it was easy for the teacher, having summarized the doctrine to be taught in a phrase which was more or less short, to question the brightest pupils first, then to proceed to the less advanced and from them to the slow learners. All the important questions were listed for the teachers in the regular handbook. But each one had to prepare his lesson by noting in writing the various sub-questions which would enable him to be sure that the matter was really understood.

The teacher made the effort to express the same ideas in different words chosen by the students themselves and put together in phrases which were different from those of the handbook he was using. This did not stop him from going back later to the official phraseology and having various students repeat this one after the other, taking turns in the order of the desks, so that all the children were questioned several times during the same lesson.

A *Warning to Teachers*, in *An Abridgment of the Duties of a Christian* stated specifically: "The teachers... will from time to time give a little talk on morals which is rather animated, about seven or eight lines long, and will always give **some practice** at the end of their catechism lesson which could be done that same day and was connected with the subject they were speaking of."[33] In the *Management of Schools*, La Salle insisted: "The teacher... will not fail, in every catechism lesson, to give some practical exercises to the students and to instruct them as impressively as he *can on those things which relate to morals and how they should behave* in order to live as good Christians," When teaching important catechism lessons, "he will choose **a story** that the pupils can appreciate and which will revive their flagging attention" that is, he should do it "in such a way that they will not be bored."[34]

In the context of Lasallian pedagogy, it is important to note that having as it were laicized the syllabary in order to make it possible for the children to understand, La Salle later "christianized" the reading lessons by two books; *The Duties of a Christian towards God*, in continuous prose, and the *Rules for Christian Decorum and Civility*. Both have a secular purpose: to improve the sustained reading of the pupils. The latter text is predominantly secular but does not omit reference to God, as we showed previously. The former does not duplicate the catechism by question and answer because it has its own two aims: to deepen the religious knowledge of teacher trainees, and to lead the students as they read it, to acquire the vocabulary and ideas of adult Christians.

Having 504 pages and a *Preface*, the *Duties of a Christian* in continuous prose was evidently not meant to be studied by children. Their texts were the four volumes of questions and answers which gave them a progressive set of texts from year to year: the *Small Abridgment.* the *Large Abridgment*, the first volume of the *Duties of a Christian by* question and answer containing parts one and two, and the second volume or part three called *External and Public Worship*, also in question and answer form.[35]

The young readers were not disoriented by the contents of the *Duties of a Christian* because the vocabulary they encountered there was what they heard in church during the sermons on Sundays and feast days. La Salle avoided philosophizing but did not limit himself to elementary ideas. He explained, he drew fine distinctions, and did not hesitate to use complex phrases. So the students met special difficulties here which made them think. The teacher interrupted to correct errors in reading which revealed lack of understanding of the sense of certain phrases. This gave rise to a lesson which went far beyond the mere reading.

From the pedagogical point of view, this reading from a work which set out the basic elements comprising a deeply Christian life, not omitting the aspects of marriage, professional work, the duties of parents to their children nor those of business owners and employers was a good preparation for adult life for pupils who often had to leave school shortly after having finished reading this book "of instruction for Christians."

La Salle was not satisfied with training teachers and giving them the books they needed for their work; he was also at pains to provide for the special needs of educating difficult children and even young delinquents whose parents could not find for them suitable institutions, nor teachers who were competent and devoted enough to succeed in educating them. This subject, special education, needs further treatment.

NOTES

1. Cf. CL 15 p iii, note 1.
2. CL 48, p 110.
3. CL 23, pp. 304-432, 433-468.
4. Cf. the introductions of CL 18 and CL 22.
5. *L'Escole paroissiale*, p. 37.
6. Charles Démia, *Règlements pour les écoles*, A. M. Lyon, GG 150, p. 20. There is a photocopy in the FEC Archives in Talence.
7. *Ibid., pp. 21-22.*
8. *Les sept trompettes pour réveiller les pécheurs et les induire à faire pénitence. Par le R.P. Barthélémy Sélutive, Récolet, traduites de l'italien en français par le R.P. Charles Jouye, religieux du même ordre*, Rouen, 1674. A copy described by Canon Allain, in *Contribution à l'histoire de l'instruction primaire en Gironde avant la Révolution*, Bordeaux, 1895, p. xliii. I am quoting from a copy edited in Rouen by J.F. Behourt in 1752 (Library of the FEC Archives, Talence).
9. CL 24, p. 24. In CL 48, pp. 89-133, there are three studies of J.-B. de La Salle's *Syllabaire français*. As for the "Little treatise on Pronunciation" referred to in the *Conduite des écoles*, I have not yet been able to identify it definitely. Most often, pronunciation follows the spelling. It is mixed in with lessons in writing and politeness. We are reminded of the writings of Le Soyeur (1661), Lartigaut (1670), and Billecocq (1711). We can see a history of pronunciation in Dauzat (Albert), *Le génie de la langue française*, Paris, 1954, pp. 1-60. In 1687 in Paris, J. Hindret had published for the Duke of Burgundy: *L'art de bien pronouncer et de bien parler la langue française.* This pamphlet would have been useful to teachers coming from Rheims to Paris in 1688.
10. CL 48, pp. 118-120: Y. Poutet, *La dispute des syllabaires,*
11. Blain, Volume I, pp. 375-376 of CL 7. This text is in Appendix 2.

12. CL 48, *loc. cit.*, pp. 115 ff.
13. CL 48, p. 131.
14. CL 24, p.32.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 33, 35.
16. *Ibid., pp. 39, 264.*
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 41.
18. CL 19, the beginning of the *Preface.*
19. *Ibid.*, Preface. "Quality" (social rank).
20. *Ibid.*, Preface.
21. CL 24, pp. 31, 62, 103, 164, 165, 169.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 258.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 205.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 78.
25. CL 17, pp. 43-96.
26. Jean-Claude Dhotel, *Les origines du catéchisme moderne*, Paris, 1967, p. 251.
27. CL 21, p. 116.
28. CL 17, p. 101.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 235-245, *Doctrine*, pp. 246-281, *Prayers Before and After Communion.*
30. CL 17, pp. 219-233.
31. CL 20, *Preface*, 9th page.
32. CL 23, p. 432.
33. CL 24, pp. 102-105.
34. CL 22. In the *Œuvres complètes de saint J.-B. de La Salle* (Rome, Frères des écoles chrétiennes, 1993), to keep the order of the *cahiers lasalliens* nos 20, 21 and 22, the *Dévoirs* are numbered I, II, III., which does not correspond with the intention of the author, who used II and III as representing the first, second and third parts of the *Devoirs d'un chrétien par questions et réponses œuvre unique* in two volumes, while the other volume (misleadingly called I) is a different work, in continuous prose. This distinction is important because of the different pedagogical purposes of his *two works, bound in three volumes.*

Chapter Four

LASALLIAN REMEDIAL EDUCATION

The term "remedial education" applies to students in economically and socially disadvantaged milieux. These groups have a particularly high percentage of children who are "handicapped by some intellectual or emotional deficiency."[1] In general, it is concerned with **maladjusted** children. La Salle was led to take a great interest in their lot because the children he took into his gratuitous schools graduated from the Poor Commission and the General Hospitals. Also, the First President of the *Parlement* of Rouen asked him for Brothers to run a corrective institution in conjunction with the ordinary boarding school he had established on the vast property of Saint Yon in the suburb of Saint Sever on the outskirts of Rouen.[2]

The excellent work of Brother Othmar Würth enables us to sketch in broad outline this special teaching which has become psychologically beneficial.

Very fittingly, he highlights six characteristics of Lasallian special remedial education. It is **holistic**, that is, it takes into account the totality of the human being and so includes his religious or spiritual dimension as well as the secular dimension. It is **individualized** in that it is adapted to each child. It is **practical**, meaning it aims to be effective. It requires the **participation** of the pupils. It is **differentiated**, for it modifies all its practices in the light of the different characters of the pupils. Finally, it is **affectionate** even when correction has to be administered because "the one who loves well, chastises well" ~~which~~ does not mean "a lot" but is moderate and timely. This affection leads pupils to be industrious in school and to seek to please the teacher.

Special education in the Lasallian sense is not aimed at the physically handicapped but at those who are "mentally deficient, educationally retarded or socially maladjusted."[3]

It is not a systematic treatise but merely suggests a few psychopedagogical solutions.

1. The example of Saint Yon, the house of correction

A study of the boarding schools of the Brothers of the Christian Schools is outside the scope of this present work, for the purpose of the Institute has never been to develop such establishments, but only to accept their necessity, by way of exception, as a complement to what is essential to it, viz. "gratuitous schools."

However, the **house of correction** at Saint Yon, whose origin we already know, has a direct link with the need, for certain families, to separate difficult children

from their more amenable and better behaved companions. Seeing in their condition a form of emotional poverty, La Salle took it upon himself to provide the special education appropriate to their temperament. When parents, burdened with "mutinous, dissolute or intractable children," became aware of the success of the Brothers' schools in Rouen, even in Paris, with street urchins giving up their licentiousness and becoming industrious in school, they asked La Salle to help them. Could he not organize for them appropriate classes on the Saint Yon property which was not fully occupied by postulants and novices?[4]

Their initiative brought results. One witness, Canon Blain, the first biographer of the Founder to have his work printed, and chaplain of Saint Yon, has furnished us with a detailed description which can be summarized as follows:

For the difficult children entrusted to him, La Salle created a house of correction or reform which should be more correctly looked upon as a place of **special remedial education**, a forerunner of present day MedicoPedagogical Institutes (I.M.P.). "Young men who were dissolute or intractable, who were to be corrected or reformed" were under the care of a Brother who never let them out of his sight. However, "they were taught catechism and motivated", "they were prepared for their first communion" if they had not already made it, "and if they had, they were taught to make reparation for their past life by a good general confession."

In his text, which is a complex one and part of which we have previously cited,Canon Blain mixes up somewhat the results obtained in the house of detention whose clientièle were adults detained by order of the King, and the results which came from the education given to difficult children. It is, however, possible to unravel those applying specifically to the latter:

> *"It is incredible how many... rebellious and uncontrollable children there lost their ferocity and impiety and how many others came back to their duty and the path of salvation. Several... asked to receive the Brothers' habit and were enrolled among them. Several did not want to leave the place except to enter monasteries. Most of those who were brought up there were an honor to the house and offered the example of their holy lives as proof of the good education they received there."*[5]

Pedagogically, a wise emulation in the quest for academic success and the improvement in their behavior grew out of the opportunity enjoyed by the pupils in the house of correction of getting away from their group known as "toughs" and to be placed with the well-behaved children as soon as they deserved to be. In this way, they transferred into the **open boarding house** not only at the time of meals but for the whole day. The fact of sharing meals with children wanting to grow in virtue as well as secular knowledge, for there were among them junior novices who wanted to become Brothers of the Christian Schools, strengthened the desire of the others to increase the efforts necessary to secure a transfer from one boarding house to the

other. However, that was not done suddenly. Several stages were foreseen. Surveillance became less and less rigid and freedom was progressively increased.

In this specialized education, several principles were brought into play. It is appropriate to give a brief analysis of them.

2. Bearing in mind variations in character

Let us take the word **character** in the broad sense which includes intelligence as well as sensitivity. Among difficult children La Salle includes those whose temperament is "superficial and fickle," **"spoiled children"** the "stubborn," whose parents overlook everything, the rough and the insolent, the dissolute incapable of self-mastery, the **"badly brought up"** who do whatever comes into their heads, the **"vicious"** for whom stealing, lying, impurity and violence are like second nature and the **incorrigible**, eternal recidivists whom it is right to send home, at least for some time, to save the class from a damaging contagion.

Other children are deficient from an intellectual point of view: there are the **ignorant**, the **stupid**, the **babyish** or the vacant, the dull-witted, the **slow** or **superficial learner** who cannot get to the bottom of anything and cannot keep up their concentration.

For each category, La Salle indicates how the teacher is to go about remedying the defect listed. The essentials of his observations follow:

The vicious need to learn "to impose a penance on themselves." The badly brought up, the selfish and the moody show an improvement in responsibility when given charge of some job in the school. Faced with the silence of the teacher, the insolent lose their arrogance. The impetuous and the chatterboxes need to be placed beside companions who are attentive to the lessons. The recalcitrant and the stubborn are corrected only if the teacher is seen to be determined, persevering, always self-possessed, exacting, although he may not punish every fault in order to rebuke only the gravest ones. Children spoiled by their parents get more out of remarks made in school when they are made gently and in private rather than in public and in a humiliating manner. Interviewing the parents is often useful to help them not to thwart the training given by the teacher. It is the same for pupils who are fond of **absenting themselves** from school. Giving them some duty to perform can help them to show greater interest in school.

3. Principal causes of the disruption caused by maladjusted children

The first cause of the social inadequacy of certain children stems from **their moral and physical neglect**. They are left to themselves while their parents are working, not for thirty-nine or forty hours a week as in our contemporary world, but for more than ten hours a day unless, as is often the case, they are looking for work because they are not otherwise hired on a daily or weekly basis.

As the most elementary hygiene is lacking in poor families, the teacher must provide a remedy by inspecting for cleanliness. Pupils carrying "some contagious affliction" are not permitted in school until such time as the "house doctor" has examined them and prescribed the means of curing them. Children afflicted with **epilepsy, ringworm** and **tumors,** at that time called scrofula, are closely watched.

The affective relationships of most poor children are disturbed because they are left to themselves. This neglect deprives them of good role models and often generates abnormal behavior in the form of violent aggressiveness, a spirit of contradiction and a refusal of all discipline. Idleness becomes habitual. No value system gives form to their personalities. Knowledge does not interest them. Intellectual effort is repugnant to them. In the face of this insubordination, parents, too preoccupied with their own economic and social difficulties, feel incapable of coping. When they witness the good results of a Lasallian school, they are quickly persuaded that the Brothers "have received grace to support the weak, to teach the ignorant and to correct the wayward."[6] Then, they see in the school a means of getting their children off the streets by entrusting them to the Brothers who watch over them almost all day "from morning to night" to "teach them to live well" as the first chapter of *Common Rules* prescribes.

4. Some particular practices in special education

In his study, Brother Othmar Würth notes that "the education process advocated by La Salle" for theological reasons as much as for pedagogical ones fits in comfortably with what modern science called *Vaterersatz* (father substitute). Relationships between the teacher and the difficult or disturbed pupil ideally are **all-embracing**, even affectionate, although always firm. That presupposes a good knowledge of the character of each child and of his progress from one month to the next. The **catalogues of scholars** distinctive to the Brothers assured a consistent follow-up when the pupil changed teachers. At the end of each year these registers were held by the Director of the educative community which was careful to work "by association". But **confidentiality** was respected, for the new teacher who received the pupil knew about him only what the Director judged fitting to tell him for the greatest good of the boy concerned. Rather than the faults and defects of the latter, educational means adapted to his temperament were the object of prudent information. In this way unfavorable *a priori* judgments, which beset both teacher and pupil, were avoided. All prejudice is destructive of good relationships.

Penalties had a pedagogical value to the degree that each Brother acted as a **father** towards the difficult pupils. Put another way, he acted through skill and persistence rather than through repeated penalties for, the more irritable a pupil was, the more any punishment would be perceived as too great. A punishment, somewhat unjust or excessive would draw onto the teacher feelings of hatred which were difficult to soothe later on. For a reprimand to be able to lead a pupil to mend

his ways, it was necessary to wait until his outburst began to subside. Any intervention after a fault had to be "medicinal" and serve as a preventive remedy. It could be called a vaccine to ward off a second offense. Rewards were worth more than punishments but it was more difficult to make a good choice of them when it was desired that they be appreciated by children of this kind. It was important that the rewards coincided with what interested them. Their interests were generally not those of children considered, sometimes wrongly, to be ideal students.

When the families of these children were more or less broken and with little culture, the example of teachers showing harmony with one another and **disinterested devotion** full of thoughtful consideration for pupils who were behind in school work or clumsy or ungainly, could bring a sense of social equilibrium to these pupils which they did not experience at home. The obligation which La Salle imposed on the Brothers "to gain hearts" was considered as one of the "principal means to get them to live in a Christian manner," It was presented as uniting "the tenderness of a mother" with "the firmness of a father" to make the children "fond of school."

Under no circumstances could the Lasallian teacher forget that the concentration span of children, especially of the less gifted was usually "of very short duration." The teacher made use of a variety of means to develop concentration: he spoke little, questioned often but briefly, addressing almost all the pupils in each lesson, chose **words suitable** for their level, had several repeat what should be known by all, beginning with those who knew it and ending with the inattentive, rewarding those who tried to answer, and making sure that the timid were not left out.

Rather than favoring the more gifted, Lasallian pedagogy sought to **make the less gifted succeed.** In reality, the two objectives were not separable, for the brighter pupils were used as tutors or introducers of the elementary steps to the backward ones. In so doing, they increased their own knowledge for they become teachers in their turn. Careless or ignorant pupils were not to be confronted with tasks beyond their ability. If they were, they became disgusted with study.

In the Lasallian system, one source of progress was the monthly assessment of the knowledge of each pupil in each subject. This was done by the Director or the Inspector of Schools and the better pupils were rewarded by a change of level or class. At the same time preserving the homogeneity of the group was preserved. The emulation was mostly not pupil against pupil but principally a form of **self-emulation** or a comparison of each pupil with himself, a comparison of which parents easily became aware.

In the fourth part of this book which presents some elements of Lasallian teaching methods applicable to all schools, certain fundamental aspects can be found, the importance of which is quite special when these schools were to welcome disturbed children who might be better catered for in specialized establishments. The essence of one of the problems was to take steps to see that the relationships among the pupils did not lead to the destruction of the direct influence of the teaching staff. Children who lacked morals had sometimes to be refused admittance in ordinary schools and directed elsewhere. This latter situation justified setting up at Saint

Yon the boarding facility for difficult children, then the house of correction, and in other buildings the house of detention for adults placed there by order of the King. This was done not only to safeguard the good name of the families but also to shield brothers and sisters and their current acquaintances from an evil influences. In fact, in ordinary schools where emotionally disturbed or maladjusted children could damage the educational ambiance of a class, La Salle demanded that steps be taken to keep clear of:

- Immoral students with the capacity to lead others into evil
- Children who often miss school without a reason
- Habitual thieves
- Pupils who pursue girls and behave badly with them
- Those who are suffering from a contagious disease.

In all institutions, classes were organized in such a way that account was taken of the physiological conditions of the children and not just of their academic levels. Without doubt, their knowledge more than their age was taken into account but their physical maturity and size imposed certain dispensations. In effect, pupils who were too big or too old felt humiliated if they were placed with a sizable number who were rather young or small, just as they would be if they were always looked upon as the incompetent ones or the last in the group. A right balance was to be maintained and it was the duty of the Director or the Inspector to see that there was a fair spread over the different classes.

The importance of the education of children by **their peers** was emphasized by the importance attached, in turn, to each and every pupil when responsibilities were allotted to them. When fulfilling various employments or duties they were called "officers" (Cf. 4th Part). With the words of Brother Othmar Würth this section on special remedial education can be concluded:

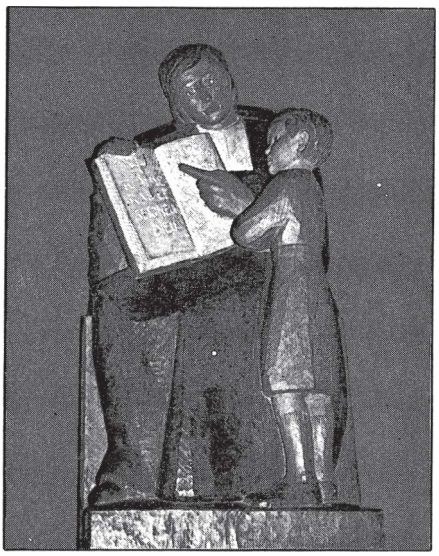
> *"The principal fruit of the institution of Christian schools is to forestall the disorders emanating from leaving the child to his own devices and to prevent the evil consequences...*
>
> *But, perhaps, it is by setting up a* ***healthy environment*** *that (La Salle) brought about the best prevention against delinquency and provided the best remedy for family flaws. A healthy environment means a whole web of interpersonal relationships which are profoundly authentic and in conformity with the deepest aspirations of human nature. The central personage in this educational environment is the Brother who, by his behavior, favors the blossoming of the school boy and holds out the hope of improving the child's family environment at the same time as he claims its support. Thus (the teacher) becomes, in a way, the model person for the boy and for his family."*[7]

With the examination of the guiding principles which inspire Lasallian teachers who have to educate more or less asocial children, the presentation in a strict sense of the **pedagogy** of John-Baptist de La Salle is finished. But the picture would be incomplete if the essential elements of the art of teaching which were put into operation were left untreated. More practical than theoretical, these elements, just as forcefully, imply convictions of a pedagogical nature.

NOTES

1. Cf. Othmar Würth, *La pédagogie de J-B de La Salle: Une contribution à l'orthopédagogie,* Rome, maison généralice des Frères des écoles chrétiennes, 1972.
2. Cf. *in fine,* Annexe III relative to this chapter IV of Part Three.
3. Würth, *op.cit.,* p.31. The citations which follow are from the same work.
4. Cf. chap.VII of First Part, and Y. Poutet, *Le XVIIe siècle et les origines lasalliennes,* Vol.II.
5. Blain *op. cit.,* Vol. II in CL 8, pp. 32-33.
6. Würth *op.cit.* quoting La Salle, *Meditations*, CL 12, p.115.
7. *Ibid.,* p. 59.

Part 4



By LaSallian method of instruction, we must understand ***a practical teaching method*** *put into action by Saint John-Baptist de La Salle. It includes the timetable and holidays, programs and material needed for teaching, rewards and punishments, the school environment, allotment of pupils and classes according to age, the methodology suited to each specialty taught, the choice and competence of teachers as well as their relationships with each other, and the practical details of their relating to parents and the world outside the school.*

More than teaching in the usual sense of the word, these practical principles contribute to the social, economic, political, and religious environment in the midst of which every educational system evolves. The method of instruction of The Brothers of the Christian Schools spread today through more than 80 countries, although spoken of as Lasallian is no longer either uniform in all places or identical to that familiar to Saint John- Baptist de La Salle in the time of Louis XIV. So in this section we will restrict observations to the Lasallian method of instruction of the years near to 1715. The Conduct of Christian Schools, the manuscript of 1706 and the edition of 1720, indicate the practical elements of this methodology. They affect ***city schools*** *more than those in the countryside since La Salle kept his Brothers in schools in urban areas.*

Some special features of the Lasallian method of instruction

Chapter One

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL

A number of facts already identified are of paramount importance in the organization of every Lasallian school. It is worthwhile examining carefully the reasons why this is so.

What was planned for each important town was to establish a single community of teachers to service several schools, generally four in number set up in four sections of the town. Having a single community meant an economy in personnel since there was need for only one Director and only one cook. Savings of this kind were indispensable at the time since the aim was to make the school gratuitous for the sake of the families. Whether parishes (from their church income) or municipalities (from social welfare funds) financed the schools intended for artisans and the poor, their budgets were limited even though generous "benefactors" called "founders," whom we today would classify as "sponsors," assisted with the finances needed to pay for buildings and teachers.

This very same need to economize led the same authorities to refuse the Brothers' permission to enroll in their schools the children of well-to-do families. Increasing the number of pupils inevitably resulted in the need for a greater number of teachers who became a charge on the public funds. Nonetheless, in courageous fashion, and believing the poor have a right not to be excluded from the presence of fellow-students who came from milieux more socially acceptable than their own, La Salle preferred to endure lawsuits rather than accept money from families "able to pay for teachers"; he would not impose on the poor the humiliation of having to prove that they were enrolled on the **Poor Register** kept by the *Poor Commission.*

To counteract the propensity of the authorities financing the gratuitous schools to increase, without limitations, the number of pupils in a class, thereby diminishing the number of teachers needed, La Salle limited class size to sixty. This meant 180 children would have three classes, and for 200 there would be four. But in this case, where four teachers were paid for by the authorities, aided or not by benefactors, La Salle added a fifth, without requiring payment for him, to take care of temporal matters or replace a sick teacher.[1] This "supernumerary" did not hesitate to give help with general supervision when and where needed. This economic approach became possible only because the Brothers lived in community, unmarried, and with a genuine love of evangelical poverty.

Since it was difficult to deal with 60 pupils of differing ability at the one time, the Lasallian method began by dividing the class into **several groups** depending on the subjects taught; some were still at the reading stage while others were beginning

writing. Each group comprised three levels. There were "the beginners," then came the "intermediate" and finally the "advanced."

Each month, according to the progress made by the pupils, there was a reorganization of their order of distribution. In this way the teacher was at the one time busy with about twenty pupils, while he saw to it that the others were not without work to do. The teaching method proper to each subject (reading, writing, arithmetic) was adapted to this manner of proceeding, as we shall see.

The organization of the school was likewise concerned with its **construction** and **school furnishings**. Both had to be functional from an essentially teaching point of view. The *Conduct of Schools* was not unaware of all this. Each pupil had to be able to reach his classroom without having to pass through another. To avoid distractions, the windows opening on to the street had to be positioned high enough to prevent any one on the inside from seeing what was going on outside. It was equally to be expected that classrooms should have **good daylight** and **fresh air**; and for that reason there had to be, if possible, windows at both ends of each room. To ensure that there was sufficient air, the rooms had to be, if possible, at least five to seven meters wide and never more than eight. A communicating door between one class and the next allowed for easier supervision should a teacher be obliged to be absent. The pupils' **benches** were of five different heights to suit the differing sizes of scholars. In the advanced class, the writers used tables with inkwells. These tables were of different heights and matched with appropriate seats to suit either tall or short children. Each table was higher in front than at the back in order to provide a *slope* which is a help in writing. Exact dimensions with a diagram were given as an example.[2]

A **blackboard** was "affixed to the wall." Its base was 1 meter, 50 cm from the ground and its top section sloped forward in such a way that the teacher could easily write with chalk over the entire surface area and the pupils following the same lesson could read clearly what was written.

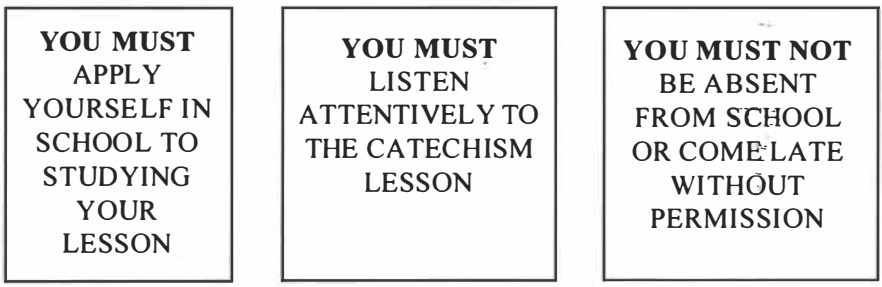
The teachers' **chairs** were described in minute detail. They were raised in such a way as to ensure full visibility over the entire classroom. A **cupboard** was used to store paper, pens, pen-knives, writing models, containers of ink, books, rewards, manuscripts and registers for use in reading; likewise, lists of students in order to keep a close check on the progress of each student. A few books and collections of maxims completed the contents of the cupboard.

A "**paper crucifix**," pictures of the most Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph and the holy Guardian Angel were pasted on thick boards and framed. This was a way of visually reminding the students that God continually watched over them and at prayer time, these images enabled them to fix their attention while allowing for prayer to the persons represented in the pictures. A similar intention to teach by visual methods was evident in the **five maxims** affixed to the walls. The teacher was able to point out, without speaking, a particular maxim that such or such a pupil should heed when he was at fault.

The teacher thereby saved his voice, did not disturb the rest of the class, but directed the attention of the student concerned, forcing him to read the maxim appropriate for him from the following:

1. "You must not absent yourself from school, nor come late, without permission.
2. You must, in school, apply yourself to studying your lesson.
3. You must always set about your writing without wasting time.
4. You must listen attentively during Catechism.
5. You must pray fervently to God both in church and at school."[3]

The entire class followed the **Catechism lesson together** but small groups of students at equivalent ability levels, operated for reading, writing and arithmetic.



NOTES

1. *A.D. du Vaucluse, H.1 Formation of new teachers or Third part of the Conduct of Christian Schools,* edited Br. Anselm, *Conduite des écoles chrétiennes,* Paris, Procure Generale, 1951, p.318
2. CL24, p.218-220.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 226, 227 and 121.

Chapter Two

THE ALLOCATION OF TEACHERS AND PUPILS

In 1716 there were in France only **22 towns** which had one or more Lasallian schools. Eight of these had only one school with two classes but there existed the hope of seeing a rapid increase in the numbers of pupils to allow for the establishment of a community of three to five teachers; one town only had a school of three classes: six had a school of four classes; seven others had more than four classes divided among several schools.[1]

Although conditions at the beginning varied, the methodology employed required some necessary adaptations, even though the teaching aims implemented were identical.

It is simplistic to write, as we have often seen, that the division of pupils in Lasallian schools into several distinct classes corresponded to the establishment of a **simultaneous** method of teaching not unlike that of colleges which replaced the **individual** teaching carried out by the *Writing Masters* and the *Masters of the Little Schools.* In fact, the Lasallian method was sometimes *simultaneous*, sometimes *individual* and sometimes *mutual,* because it always took into consideration simultaneously the quite unequal abilities of children and the demands of teaching by group levels.

So that the teacher could follow each pupil in a special way, the children in the same school were divided into groups that were meant to follow the same "lesson." La Salle defined each of these groups by the word "**lesson**." It was each "lesson" or group which consisted, as was pointed out earlier, of "beginners," "intermediate" pupils and "advanced." For reading, then for writing and arithmetic, La Salle composed several graded "lessons" but the basis for this arrangement depended on reading ability. When a school had only two classes, the junior class could expect to have up to five "lessons" or basic groups. For convenience sake, the description offered by the *Conduct of Schools* can be explained by drawing up a table showing the allocation of pupils according to their stage of progress: some abbreviations will enable us to recognize the set-up more easily. For reading there were nine stages: L1 = **The Alphabet Chart** for a period of one month, L2 = **Syllable Chart**, L3 = **Syllabary** just for naming the letters, L4 = **Syllabary** for reading by syllables, L5 = **Second Book**, in continuous discourse, L6 = **Third Book** with punctuation and numbers, L7 = **Psalter** for reading in latin, L8 = **Civility** in Gothic script, L9 = **Manuscripts** and accounts.

If the school had three classes, the teacher in charge of the junior class generally looked after levels L1 and L4, the teacher for the middle group looked

after pupils from L5 up to L7, and the teacher for the senior class taught levels L8 and L9.

At an appropriate time, lessons in **writing** and **arithmetic** were fitted into the timetable of some classes. At times, this led to some extreme complications. Let us examine a week's arrangement. The pupils who were beginning the "third book" in continuous discourse studied for half an hour on Monday the "chart" of vowels, accents, punctuation and the common Latin abbreviations, in preparation for reading the *Psalter.* On Friday afternoon they familiarized themselves with the "chart" for numbers containing both French and Roman figures, thus preparing for arithmetic lessons. Writing was begun only when the pupils knew "how to read perfectly," which, in principle, indicated that they belonged to the "advanced" group for Latin (L7). It was far less simple in practice. Older children who would not be spending a long time at school, needed to learn writing, and so they began forming the letters before knowing "how to read perfectly." Conversely, the small hands of younger children—less than ten years— risked being damaged in their attempts to sharpen their quills; and some children might have formed the habit of adopting awkward finger positions which would be difficult to correct later on.

The teacher in view of all this, had to examine the situation carefully. So it could happen that pupils aged twelve would be admitted to the group of "writers" even if they have not yet reached the stage of being at the 3rd book for reading.

The 1706 *Management of Schools* listed eight steps in the teaching writing in round hand and six for the sloped script while the editi⁰n of 1720 has simplified things by retaining only six steps for writing in round hand and five for the *sloped* also called *Italian.* The writing for "accounts" was round writing of average height, or large, while the writing said to be for "commerce was in small round. The perfection sought by the most "advanced" consisted of success with running or "cursive" handwriting that is perfectly legible. In practice, older children who were beginning their schooling were dispensed from practicing round writing. They began with the Italian script, which because it is sloped is closer to running hand style.

Only when pupils reached the fourth stage for writers did the teaching of **arithmetic** begin. The lesson was set down for Monday morning "at the beginning of writing," as well as for a half-hour on Tuesday and Friday afternoons. The following abbreviations can be used to designate the different stages in arithmetic: A1 = addition, A2 = subtraction, A3 = multiplication, A4 = division, A5 = rule of three. As for writing and reading, each stage had three categories of students: the "beginners," the "intermediates" and the "advanced" where all, (at their particular stage) followed "the same lesson."

Spelling was studied especially when students were at the stage of beginning to read manuscripts. This corresponded to the stage when Italian script and round writing were studied together. The children read and copied "promissory notes, receipts, trade agreements, legal deeds,... lease documents," in order to learn "how to draw up similar ones." The teacher used them to advantage by making the children take notice of and imitate the spelling.[2]

In parish schools during Saint John-Baptist de La Salle's time, no courses in history, geography, or linear drawing were programmed. The Brothers of the Christian Schools introduced them some years later beginning with **technical drawing**—a skill that numerous artisans needed. It had already been introduced into the Sunday schools of the Founder's day. After first starting in the parish of Saint-Sulpice in Paris, it had spread along with the elements of commerce to the St. Yon boarding school near Rouen.

Although the teacher kept a continual watch over the **politeness** of pupils, it was through the medium of reading that ideas on correct behavior, as well as a deepening of religious knowledge were acquired in the ordinary catechism lessons which completed the program. The *Duties of a Christian* in continuous discourse was begun at level L6 while the *Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility* were kept for the pupils in L8.

The extraordinary diversity in the internal organization of the school, the transfer of pupils from one class to another without always waiting till year's end leave some questions unanswered, such as: At what age did schooling begin? When did it finish? How many years of study were there?

We have been given, however, a few examples imagined by the author of the *Management of Schools*. In order not to embarrass anybody, these examples were fictitious as proven by the dates accompanying them. A certain pupil Mulot returned to school on 31st August 1706 and left the same day. These examples also show that the **beginning** of schooling at a Lasallian school was at ages six and a half, eight and a half and sixteen.

Terieux began his studies at age **six and a half**. Two years later, he finished the year with the following accomplishments: Alphabet Chart, Syllable Chart, second and third books for reading and even the Psalter in Latin. He was about to begin the third level for writing (E3) and was reading in the *Christian Decorum*. He began writing before he was nine years old and was in a class of writers, who were beginning the study of arithmetic. He would most likely finish school before his **eleventh year** for the only thing left for him to do was to perfect his writing and arithmetic.

Lambert was quite different. He was **eight and a half years** when he started in a Lasallian school. At age twelve and a half, he was among the advanced in the top class and was reading manuscripts. He was beginning the final stage of writing, small writing. In arithmetic, he studied division and was soon to start on the rule of three. It was thought he would leave school at the end of the current school year, that is to say at about **age thirteen.**

Mulot was somewhat unstable. He was already **aged sixteen** when he was enrolled in a Lasallian school. He had been confirmed two years earlier, but made his first communion only a few months previously. He had already attended four other schools directed by teachers "of the little schools requiring payment": two years at one school, one year at another, and half-a-year only at each of two others. He was absent twice a month, no doubt with permission, to attend to family needs. The Brothers placed him in the group reading the *Christian Decorum* and practicing

at the third level of writing. He would soon begin arithmetic but only at the addition stage. As an exception, he was permitted to arrive at school at 9 am and at 3 pm instead of at 8 and 1.30 pm.[3]

In the *Third part of the Conduct of Schools* which is not included in the 1720 edition but which the manuscript copy entitled, *The Duties of the Inspector of Schools* was published in CL24 (p.249-290), two further examples are given.

François Richard came to the Brothers' school only at **age twelve.** Nonetheless, he was not without knowledge. An earlier attendance at other teachers' schools had allowed him to enter the senior class to perfect his skills in round writing, spelling and arithmetic. He would probably remain at school for one year.

In contrast, Gribouval was **aged six** when the Brothers put him in the junior class along with those who were reading only the "Alphabet Chart."[4] If he were assiduous there is reason to believe he would complete his cycle of studies in four or five years, and that he would leave school when he was about **ten or eleven** years old and could read perfectly in French and Latin, and in *the Christian Decorum* and even from manuscripts difficult to decipher. He would know how to write in round writing and in sloped (or Italian) style, in commercial hand and in small quick hand. He would be spelling correctly texts dealing with day-to-day living, without considerable discussion about grammar, and he would know enough arithmetic to employ the rule of three in more than four varied applications along with their proofs.

The transposing of pounds to pence and half-pence as well as calculations dealing with weights and measures would not cause him any difficulty despite their complexity before the 1795 law which required that the decimal system be generally applied to the meter and its derivatives. He would even be able to read Roman numerals up to several million.

As for determining how long he would have stayed in each class, that would depend on the school he attended. The number of classes varied effectively with the total number of pupils in the school, since no class was to have more than sixty students, at least theoretically. With groups changing each month, it was rare that one class corresponded exactly to one year's study for all students. Where there was a school with two classes, each student might stay two or three years in each one. If a school had six classes, some students might well remain less than a year in some classes. Besides, in the time of Louis XIV, the first steps in schooling could vary from one child to the next and not necessarily begin with the usual re-opening date, habitually set down for October 2nd. In general, the vacation period corresponded with "the entire month of September."

We have seen that a pupil aged between six and even sixteen could be enrolled in a school during the course of the school year. He was then placed in the class and the group which best corresponded with his degree of knowledge, taking into account, however, the two other conditions, namely: the number of students that must not be increased in a given class, the age as well as the physical and mental development of the newcomer.

All this school organization allowed to be set in place not only a form of teaching in ability groups, but one which used a methodology that was sometimes

PROGRESS CHART TO FACILITATE THE ALLOTMENT OF PUPILS

L1	L2	L3	L4	L5	
Alphabet Chart	Syllable Chart	French Spelling Book. - Beginners - Intermediates - Advanced	Second Book *Spelling* - beginners - intermediate - advanced	Second Book: *Reading by syllables* - after spelling - without spelling	For L7, L8, L9, the letters E & Eb stand for: - Round Writing (E) - Sloped or Italian Writing (Eb)

L6	L7	L8	L9
Third book in continuous discourse - beginners - intermediates - advanced	*Psalter* in Latin - beginners - intermediates - advanced who become >	*Civility* read with pauses • beginners • intermediates • advanced who become	Manuscripts or Registers for reading with six degrees of difficulty. - large handwriting - average handwriting - small handwriting - careless handwriting - difficult handwriting -very difficult handwriting WRITING & SPELLING E5, E6, Eb4, Eb5, Eb6 with speed writing.
	Writing begins with the "advanced" in Latin except for older pupils who begin writing when learning to read in Latin. There are six groups for round writing and six for italian or sloped thence: E1, E2, E3, and Eb1, Eb2, Eb3 + beginning of ARITHMETIC - addition - subtraction		ARITHMETIC - multiplication and proofs - division and proofs - rule of three

In practice, the divisions in classes with less than sixty pupils was not as rigid as this table would indicate. The main consideration was always to let all students in the *same reading group* follow the same lesson, just as one group of students doing arithmetic had a lesson in a group composed of pupils from the various levels. For writing, a school could have in one class some E3 who read Latin (L3) while other E3 students read *Decorum* and just starting arithmetic, would find themselves in another class.

simultaneous, sometimes individual. What really transpired under Lasallian influences was that at times students became co-operators with the teacher. In this way, then they had the advantages not only of a reciprocal method, but of an especially active pedagogy.

NOTES

1. *CL 57, p.147 needs to be corrected according to the information supplied by Rigault vol. 1, p.409-410 by replacing "Arles" with Alès, in the diocese of Uzès, and by including Brother Barthélémy as a member of the St. Yon community. Thus we have in the diocese of Rheims, 13 Brothers (9 at Rheims, 4 at Rethel); in the diocese of Laon, 8 Brothers (5 at Laon, 3 at Guise); in the diocese of Paris, 13 Brothers (11 at Paris, 2 at Saint-Denis); in the diocese of Versailles, 4 Brothers; in the diocese of Moulins, 2 Brothers; in the diocese of Mende, 2 Brothers; in the diocese of Viviers (Les Vans) 2 Brothers; in the diocese of Uzès, 4 Brothers (Alès); in the diocese of Avignon, 4 Brothers; in the diocese of Boulogne, 12 Brothers (6 at Calais, 6 at Boulogne); in the diocese of Rouen, 22 Brothers, 2 at Darnétal, 10 at Rouen, 10 at Saint-Yon in the parish of Saint-Sever; to sum up a total of 100 Brothers, to which must be added Brother Drolin, in Rome, and the Founder John-Baptist de La Salle who does not have the direction of a school nor of a community.*
2. CL 24, p.16 - 18, 25 - 43 and 69 - 75
3. *CL 24, p.235, 237 and 263-269.*
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 256-257.

Chapter Three

INDIVIDUALIZING SIMULTANEOUS TEACHING

1. Individualized teaching

The Lasallian teacher who generally spoke either to all the fifty or sixty pupils in a class or to a group of ten or twenty, did not fail to individualize his teaching. While questioning first some then others, he kept in mind the strengths and deficiencies of each child and also their different degrees of attainment in the subject being taught. Instead of seeking to show that he was more learned than the children, he preferred to **question** first those who were most likely to answer well and who would be pleased to be questioned rather than to humiliate the less knowledgeable. The latter were questioned only later on after five or six more or less average pupils were questioned with the help of easier sub-questions.

But many occasions existed in the various classes where elementary teaching took place which necessitated really **individual** attention. Thus, for writing, the teacher began by explaining to the group the position the pupils were to adopt, then he passed behind each one and "personally placed the scholar in the desired posture."[1] He positioned the hand of each beginner "along a stick as thick as a quill" on which three grooves were carved to show exactly on what spots the fingers were to be placed. It is obvious that the spots were not spread identically on each stick for they had to take into account the size of the children. The same exercise was then carried out many times by each pupil using a real pen.[2]

During each of the subsequent lessons the teacher kept on passing behind the pupils to rectify the posture and finger movements of each one. Over several weeks, to obtain good letter formation, he did not fail "to guide their hands from time to time."[3] When anyone was judged ready to trim his goose feathers himself, the teacher showed him "how to do it, and for this purpose" had him come up to him. The teacher then took the opportunity to explain to him all the technical terms which were used to refer to the different sections of a quill, terms which our pen and biro civilization has not retained in its technology lessons. This individual apprenticeship was repeated three days in a row for each pupil.[4] The explanation of this aspect, let us call it physical, of teaching writing takes up at least ten pages of the *Management* including those on "inspecting the writers and correcting their writing."[5] This individual following-up did not prevent the teacher from delegating his functions to certain pupils, at least at certain times.

2. Teaching done by mutual method

We are not talking here of the Lancastrian type of mutual teaching which gave rise to a veritable war of methods in France between 1815 and 1830[6], but only of the participation of "advanced" pupils in the instruction of their companions known as "beginners."

In arranging the school children on their benches in the classroom, the teacher was careful to see that a more advanced pupil was seated next to a weaker one. Each "newcomer" was placed beside one of the initiated whose mission it was "to teach him to follow easily" as far as possible without talking.[7] The "first person in the row" usually acted as the distributor and collector of papers or copies.

For writing, a child who "had difficulties" in mastering the correct movement for forming the letters was beside another who "performed the movement fluently." The child who held his body and pen wrongly was beside someone who held them correctly and he could model himself on him.[8]

In the morning and afternoon, for the half hour before the start of lessons, "one of the best behaved school children" called "the inspector" fulfilled the duty of associate of the teacher, almost his deputy, although he was not to intervene and was to keep silence. He was empowered simply to write down the names of the talkers and the unruly, for this time was reserved for extra study of the lessons which would be examined in class. To preclude any kind of denunciation, the pupil-inspector knew that two other companions of his would be questioned privately by the teacher to check the bases of their observations so that no punishment would be administered without a discreet previous inquiry each time some disturbance arose. During this half hour, however, silence was not absolute. The children helped one another, two by two, to recite their lessons to one another. The classroom was a hive that was buzzing, but softly. In the junior class, a pupil from a more advanced group helped those who could not read to decipher either the alphabet chart or the syllable chart. These charts like the blackboard, were visible to everyone. To do this he used a pointer to indicate letters and syllables.

These were named first by those who could do so, then repeated by the others in order to engrave them on everyone's memory. In the various classes certain groups, in pairs, repeated either the morning and evening prayers that had previously been explained to them by the teacher, or the questions and answers of the diocesan catechism.[9]

Throughout the day the teacher did not act alone. Pupils called "officers" contributed to the general good order.

The two "reciters of prayers," one for the morning the other for the afternoon, were changed each month. Thus, about twenty pupils profited from this post each year. A "bearer of the sprinkler" and a "bearer of the beads" were appointed to lead the ranks when all the children went to the church for daily Mass. The first presented the holy water for each one to use to make the sign of the cross on entering. The second handed rosary beads to his assistants who distributed them to children who

could not read so that they could make use of them to pray during the Mass. The others had the use of *Instructions and prayers for holy Mass* published in 1705 or 1706.[10]

One pupil was charged to ring the bell for the whole school at the beginning and end of classes. Every half hour he rang it to recall the presence of God. In the writing classes, one or two distributors or collectors of papers and models of writing made sure that no one lacked what he needed and did not forget to dry his writing with care, before handing his paper. A "doorkeeper" opened and locked the main door of the school in the morning, at midday and in the evening. A "key bearer" accompanied him and had responsibility for the key as well as the duty of seeing that everything in the different classes was looked after. Each evening, one pupil from each class had the task of sweeping the room after sprinkling water to settle the dust.

Three functions mentioned in 1706 had disappeared by 1720 either because by that time they were normally done by the teacher or entrusted little by little to different pupils. They were those which consisted of "visiting those absent," noting bench by bench the names of the latter (to fill in the absentee register), and, after breakfast, eaten in school, gathering the remaining pieces of bread so that the teacher could distribute them to the children who were too poor to bring any from home.[11]

This fairly-wide sharing of responsibilities or of the work to be done to ensure the smooth running of a class or school, thanks to the assistance of a comparatively large number of pupils, helped to create a homogeneous and family climate, which brought about a real attachment to everything done in the establishment. However, there were other circumstances and times when the teacher addressed the whole class or group together. At those times, one could speak of simultaneous teaching.

3. Simultaneous teaching of groups of the same standard

It would be completely mistaken to compare a Lasallian class of the 17th century with a college class of that time or our own. It would be closer to reality to think of rural schools of a single class which take pupils from the time they learn their alphabet through to the end of primary school. At the same time, when the motives which led La Salle to exclude rural schools from the ordinary sphere of activities of the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* are investigated, it is seen that, besides the determination to address a more urgent social need, there must be added a concern for organizing each school in a more effective manner. If it was possible to have schools of three or four classes to be able to set up communities, this situation favored better teaching as well as the progressive formation of new teachers, thanks to the support of their *confrères*.

With nine degrees or levels of reading, six of writing and five of arithmetic foreseen by the *Management of schools*, it can easily be imagined that these diverse

EXAMPLE OF A SMALL CLASS OF 40 CHILDREN ON LEVELS L1, L2, L3, L4, L5.

7.30	Doors open and pupils assemble without the teachers. One pupil in each class sees that all are orderly.

8.00	Prayer presided over by a pupil and a Christian Reflection by the teacher. Breakfast during which the pupils recite, in pairs, the prayers that the teacher taught them in the previous catechism lesson. The teacher examines the 'readers' (L4) who have had to study a lesson in the diocesan catechism or in the abridged edition. Likewise L5.

8:30	L1 (12 pupils) The teacher has them read the *alphabet chart.*	L2 (10 pupils) L3 (8 pupils) L4 (10 pupils) L5 (10 pupils) All these pupils in the class follow and contribute on occasion to help L1.	
9:00	These pupils follow.	The teacher has the *Syllable chart* read	These pupils follow and help L2.

9:30	All these pupils follow.	The teacher conducts spelling from the *Syllabary.*	These pupils follow and help on occasion.
10:00	All these pupils follow.		The teacher takes L4 and L5 for spelling and reading from the second book L4, L5.
10:30	The whole school leaves for the church. Mass (The daily timetable would be modified if Mass time was different. Each pupil goes home, but ranks are broken only at the cross streets		

In the AFTERNOON, the teaching of secular subjects lasts two and a half hours rather than two hours.

The work is split up as in the morning but each segment is lengthened by approximately 10 minutes. This gives

1.30 Alphabet Chart for L1
About 2.10 .....Syllable Chart for L2.
About 2.45.....Syllabary for L3.
About 3.30.....2nd book for L4, L5.
4.00 Catechism for the whole class.
4.30 Each one goes home, in ranks as far as the cross streets

It will be noted that the timetable would be modified a little from 9.30 to 10.30 if L4 + L5 regrouped to a total of 20 pupils instead of 10. The attention given to L3 (8 pupils) would be curtailed for the benefit of L4, L5.

EXAMPLE OF A LARGE CLASS OF PUPILS IN L6, L7, L8, L9.

7:30	Doors open and pupils assemble without the teacher. One pupil in each class sees to it that all are orderly.

8:00	Prayer presided over by a pupil and a Christian reflection by the teacher. Breakfast during which the pupils recite, in pairs and in an undertone, the diocesan catechism which has been given to them to study, and the teacher — examines them — checks the writing books and the arithmetic books.

8:30	L6 (12 pupils) The teacher has them read the third book.	L7 (13 pupils) These pupils follow in the third book.	L8 (15 pupils) *writers* These pupils write and thus learn spelling.	L9 (10 pupils) *writers*
9:00	These pupils follow.	The teacher has them read Latin (*Psalter*).	These pupils write and thus learn spelling.	
9:30	These pupils follow.		The teacher has them read from the book *Decorum*	These pupils follow.
10:00	These pupils practice reading alone, using 3rd book or read the Psalter.		These pupils write or read by themselves.	The teacher has them read manuscripts.
10:30	Leave for the church and Mass. After Mass, each one goes home. Teachers go with ranks as far as the cross streets.			

ON MONDAY MORNINGS L9 (8:30 - 9:30) write and do ARITHMETIC exercises in their books.
ON MONDAY AND FRIDAY AFTERNOONS from 1:30 - 2:00, all follow the same lesson.
On Monday afternoons they study the table of vowels and consonants including accents and Latin abbreviations which are explained by the teacher.
On Friday afternoons the numbers table is explained.

ON OTHER DAYS THE AFTERNOON ALLOCATIONS OF TIME COULD POSSIBLY BE

1:30	L6 (12 pupils) These pupils practice reading the 3rd book or Latin.	17 (13 pupils)	L8 (15 pupils) These pupils write.	L9 (10 pupils) The teacher has them read manuscripts.
1:45	*Ibid.*		The teacher has them read from *Decorum*.	The pupils read manuscripts individually.
2:45	These students follow.	The teacher takes them for Latin reading.	These pupils practice writing.	
3:00	The teacher has them read from	These pupils follow from the Psalter.	These pupils practice writing.	
3:45	These pupils read the Psalter individually.		The teacher has them read from *Decorum*	These pupils write.
4:00	For the whole class: catechism explained by the teacher using questions and sub-questions and rounded off with stories.			

ON TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS the teacher does not have group L7 read from the Psalter. He is correcting the arithmetic exercises from 2:45 - 3:00 (for L7, L8, L9).

groups had to be spread over several classrooms. A rural school could not be run satisfactorily using the same regulations.

All pupils on the same group level, be they "beginners," "intermediates" or "advanced" followed together the lesson organized by the teacher. In this case, the teaching could be classified as simultaneous by groups of the same standard. But these groups were reconstituted each month according to the progress of the pupils. The first-day group of those who did not know the alphabet effectively disappeared as soon as these pupils were able to read words. Other groups were formed later on when, in the same class or a higher one, they reached the stage of reading Latin or the *Christian Decorum* book printed in gothic characters, and then the various levels of writing and arithmetic.

It was only during the daily **catechism** lesson that the teacher taught the whole class together **simultaneously**.

The difficulty was to provide work for the pupils who did not belong to the group the teacher was working with during a lesson. While he was busy with one group, the others were practicing reading another book or writing or doing arithmetic. Sometimes written work was corrected in class the very day it was done, sometimes the next day when an "assignment" had to be finished off at home. This way of teaching demanded a meticulous timetable and particularly careful lesson preparation.

Dividing pupils into separate classes and into cohesive groups required extensive experience. It was the responsibility of the Director or the Inspector, depending on the school. However, the community life of the Brothers assured, better than gatherings of teachers who were strangers to one another, could ever do, continuous coordination in harmony with the real needs of each child. A table is needed to set out this complexity more clearly. Neither the 1706 *Management* nor that of 1720 set out the detailed timetable. This was done only in the *Third part of the Management* which remained in hand-written form throughout the period of its use. It pointed out how to decide on how long a lesson should last. The time differed according to the number of classes in the school and the number of pupils in each group level. The most difficult case was that of a school with only **two classes** and the following divisions obtained.[12]

Firstly there is the special case of Wednesdays. Indeed, each Wednesday the afternoon **catechism** lasted a full hour instead of half an hour. It was divided into two parts: explanations and questions on the essential truths of faith and Christian morality connected with the "principal mysteries" recalled by the liturgy took the first half hour; this was followed by the ordinary religious instruction on the daily program. In the sample presented for a **small class**, the time slots were: 1.30 - 2.00 - 2.30 - 3.00 followed by catechism. In the **large class**, the timetable was somewhat different: 1.30 - 1.45 - 2.30 - 3.00 then catechism.

The extreme complexity of setting up a pedagogy adapted to a school of only two classes was what La Salle wanted to spare his teachers from by laying claim, as far as possible, to schools which could eventually consist of at least **four classes**. His concern not to wait until the end of each year to re-arrange the composition of groups and classes added to the complexity of a system more mindful of the best interests of each child than of simplifying the work of the teachers.[13]

As reading from the *alphabet chart* lasted only a month for the brighter children, and two months for the slower ones, it is clear that group *L1* did not survive long, even when account was taken of children enrolled late in school. It was the same, or almost so, for group L2, while the L5s passed quickly on to the advanced class which took in the L6s. In the case of a two-class school, it was plain that many children, if not all, remained several years in the same room. Changing rows in each class took place each month following checks on the students' capacity carried out by the Director or Inspector or even by the "head teacher." This contributed to emulation as well as to social interaction between children from different cultural backgrounds. Pedagogy, the art of educating and of socializing, showed its advantage here.

In the timetables it was noticeable that there were neither recesses nor **recreations**. At that time, the buildings used by the Brothers were not constructed as schools. It was only after their arrival at Boulogne-sur-Mer and Saint Yon that things changed.

Once the manner of organizing classes has been examined, the question arises as to what methods characterized the teaching of the basic subjects.

NOTES

1. CL 24, p. 54.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
4. *Ibid.* p. 59.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-69.
6. The best study of this question is the thesis of Robert-Raymond Tronchot. f.é.c., defended at the Sorbonne in 1972. A single volume edition of the 3 vol. typed in-4 work was produced by the University of Lille, *L'enseignement mutuel en France de 1815 à 1830.*
7. CL 24, p. 263.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 265.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 265.
10. Cf. CL 17, Cf. CL 17: The prayers for Mass occupy much in this edition, preserved from 1734, pp. 43-96.
11. CL 24, pp.204-218.
12. The Third part of the Management of schools, 1706 ms., (CL 24 pp.249-290) was not printed until 1951 (ed. Brother Anselm La Conduite des ecoles, Paris, Ligel). It is not at all surprising that contradictions and even practical impossibilities were encountered, and so it is not always possible to reconstruct how a teacher proceeded when groups on very different levels were together in the same class. The original copyist left out certain words, certain explanations which were indispensable to the full understanding of the text. Our reconstruction endeavored to remedy this by taking into account various passages scattered through the 1706 and 1720 texts.
13. CL 24, pp. 273-290.

Chapter Four

EDUCATING THROUGH WRITING, SPELLING AND ARITHMETIC

Reading opens all types of knowledge to the child.

If **writing** is an art rather than a science, it is, in the Lasallian school, the entry to several types of knowledge. It prepares the hand for linear design, which with the geometric forms and the calculation of area will become familiar to adult classes as well as to higher classes of boarding schools. In the short term, it is what serves as a basis for the study of **spelling** and the elementary rules of grammar. Copying maxims, sentences, good texts as well as passages taken from the *Gospels*, from *The Duties of a Christian* and from the *Rules of Christian Decorum*, or from useful written documents such as those of application for employment, rental contracts, family and business correspondence, lawyers' findings, represents a whole host of social, professional and religious ideas that can be introduced with the possibility of adding on historical and geographical concepts and even elements of literary culture or philosophy should the teacher see fit to do so. It was by this technique, first of all, that the cultural elements which were so advantageous to children of less favored social levels developed in the 18th century.[1]

1. The pupils learn spelling through writing

The teacher checks the spelling of the **papers** written during the writing lesson. He has the pupils write similar texts from memory. In addition to the daily oral recitation of answers to certain questions in religious instruction, he also gets the children to write answers from memory. A special note book is kept for this work of training in spelling. Every Tuesday and Friday the pupils bring this, as well as their arithmetic book to the teacher for correction. Correction is done on an individual basis, the pupils coming to the teacher each in turn, while the others are doing their writing. The exercise once corrected is later copied without error at home. This second copy is checked by the teacher while he goes along the rows of students to check their arithmetic homework and the writing exercises done in class relating to the lessons of the day.

Dictation has its place in the study of spelling. It is never rushed so as not to diminish the quality of the writing of those who are not so intelligent. The teacher reads a sentence. One of the pupils spells out each word as he writes it in his workbook. The whole class writes the sentence with the accents and punctuation

that the teacher and pupil who repeated the sentence have pointed out. Then comes the moment for a second pupil to spell out the entire dictated passage including accents and punctuation. If he makes an error, the teacher intervenes or else gets another pupil who can correct the mistake to continue the exercise. As often occurs in the Lasallian classroom, a small instrument called "the signal" allows the teacher to intervene without speaking, taking over whenever he judges it useful. An entire chapter of the *Conduct of Schools* details the different signs or signals that can be used. During this re-reading of the dictated text each one works to remove even the slightest mistake from his work. It is not mentioned that mistakes should be counted: what is essential is **that the result be perfect.**

This is what the teacher will check when he corrects the writing while passing along the rows of seats. The major concern of the teacher is to ensure that there is no mistake in any pupil's work, for La Salle does not subscribe to the view that allowing pupils to make mistakes in spelling would gradually lead them to make no errors. He knows, and says so often, that any mistake (moral or other) leaves a residue in the same way that every act can be the beginning of a good or bad habit. In his opinion, it is by increasing the number of times that a pupil copies passages **without making any errors** that pupils get the habit of writing correctly. The repetition of words and sentences in the course of the dictation enriches the memory and keeps the mind active.[2]

If **reading** and **writing** provide occasions to study spelling and familiarize oneself either with current vocabulary or with the proper behavior and Christian life, the teaching of counting and arithmetic allows the teachers to communicate to the children practical notions that are necessary to make daily purchases, and even more so for business people and craftsmen.

2. An arithmetic based on usefulness

It is in a chapter that outlines the *Duties of the inspector of schools* that the full extent of the programs of arithmetic is revealed. The highest level is the fifth grade. This is made up of children who "can do all types of division" and learn not only the rule of three but also "aliquot parts and fractions."[3] The blackboard fixed to the wall contains no writing other than what master and children write in the course of the lessons.[4] The difficulty was greater in the 17th century than today because the decimal system was not in use. The *Conduct* required the master to explain the reasoning behind the method of counting that he was teaching because the pound was worth twenty shillings and it was necessary to mention shillings when one had twelve pence. Repetition in parrot fashion was not appropriate. While correcting the work of each pupil the teacher:

> *"Points out all errors in a reasoning way, asking for example why one begins with pence? Why pence are changed to shillings*

and shillings to pounds?...and other similar questions...to give a complete understanding to the child."[5]

With the chapter of the *Conduct* devoted to **arithmetic** one can better understand how a Lasallian master of the century of Louis XIV acted to keep up the interest of all sixty children who followed a lesson in the same class even though there were often groups at different levels.

On **Saturday,** the last school day of the week, the master wrote on the blackboard an exercise suitable for each of the levels of arithmetic reached by the pupils. On **Monday** morning at the beginning of the writing class, each pupil recopied the exercise that concerned him in a notebook each pupil had personally made by sewing together sheets of paper that had been divided into four. The so-called lesson proper was explained from the beginning of the class of **Tuesday** afternoon, lasting half an hour. The teacher gave the figures for an addition problem to a pupil while another wrote on the board the answers as they were given to him, then he erased them out and another pupil came to the board and did exactly the same while listening to a fourth who came and repeat the process. The master proceeded in similar fashion to teach subtraction: questioning first the children who were at the highest level and were the most capable, and he intervened only to correct any mistakes or when he began a new phase of the program beyond the capability of any of the pupils.

All the pupils followed the explanation, even those who had not begun the study of arithmetic. However, pupils in this group were not questioned, and they did not have to do the exercises at home. Little by little, however, they learned the procedure. They were not out of their depth when they heard their parents counting. In this way, the advanced pupils felt they were helping in the instruction of the less advanced .

On the afternoon of each Tuesday and each Friday the teacher used the time devoted to the writing lesson to check the results of the calculations the children had done in their books at home. On Monday they finished the work which the teacher had written on the blackboard. On Thursday, a holiday, the problems given to each one "according to his capacity" after being corrected on Wednesday, were done at home.

The inclusion of "the rule of three" in the program needs no comment because calculations of interest, division of inheritances according to the number of children as well as the changing of **pounds** to **shillings**, then **shillings** to **pence** when one **pound** was worth twenty **shillings** and a **shilling** equaled twelve **pence** was necessary in daily life. It was not simple. Other changes relative to different units of measurement were even more difficult. Thus, the **mile** corresponded to "an hour's walk" and worked out to **1500 geometric feet;** each of these was worth five **imperial feet** while it took **six feet** to make a **toise** and a **foot** was divided into **12 inches** or **144 lines**. For measurements of area, the **square toise** was worth **36 square feet** etc. The same complication existed for volume and weight. The *Conduct of Schools*

did not enter into details of names and values because the same terms had meanings that varied from city to city. Thus, in Paris the **marc pound** represented two **marcs** and was equal to **16 ounces**, while in Marseilles **13 ounces** equaled a **pound.** These differences were handled by the Brothers according to the city where they were sent. They obliged the Brothers to juggle numbers, and multiples and sub-multiples and to adapt their school exercises to the local customs

Not only the cultural progress from one generation to the next, but the introduction of the decimal system would later require the expansion of the programs and changing of methods. It is important at the present time to evaluate the permanent elements of Lasallian teaching methods even if the object of the present work is not to follow the way they have changed with the passage of time.

NOTES

1. *Conduct of schools*, CL 24, pp. 47-69.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 73-75.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 269.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 69, 226-227. In the library of the FSC archives at Talence, there are two editions of a valuable work granted royal privilege dated 30th August 1706. Close perusal shows that La Salle knew of it and used it: Étienne DE BLÉGNY, *Les éléments ou premières instructions de la jeunesse* (one edition 1712, the other 1732), with a dedication to "fathers of families" and to "young people." Written with good examples of calligraphy, pronunciation and arithmetic are explained in turn. Blégny was an "expert jurist, and writer."
5. CL 24, pp. 71-72.

CONCLUSION

OUTDATED AND ENDURING ELEMENTS OF 18TH CENTURY TEACHING PRACTICES

The *Preface* to the *Conduct of Schools* makes it quite clear that the text "is not in the style of a book of rules." It is subject to variation in its application depending on time, place, and the abilities of both teachers and students taught, as well as of the increasing degree of knowledge that accumulates from one generation to the next. From the outset, it also depends on the on-going development of teaching programs. When society is organized in such a way as to separate affairs of Church and State, in other words, the sacred and the secular, when it is obvious that different religions co-exist and when there is a proliferation of sects or of followers of materialism or agnosticism, a school open to all just cannot function in the same way as it did in 18th century France. Then France was governed by him, whom the nations generally regarded as "the most Christian king," ruler of France, "the eldest daughter of the Church." Hence, school organization and teaching practices underwent an evolution. This was both very pleasing and very Lasallian. De La Salle had passed on to the *Brothers of the Christian Schools* the charge of ensuring that future generations would profit by their teaching experiences in time and place. The last edition of the "*Management of Schools*" was printed in 1903. It had never failed to improve with successive reprintings, several of which in the second half of the 19th century scarcely retained any more than the initial title, so much did the new changes prove to be of major importance.

A complete re-working of the *Management of Schools* arising from a decision of the 1897 General Chapter of the Brothers finished as a series of volumes entitled *"Elements of practical pedagogy."* Unfortunately the 1904 French laws forbade the Brothers to teach and so prevented the volumes from being as well known as they deserved despite their being a really first-class treatise of practical pedagogy.

1. Outdated elements

Rather than looking upon the *Management of Schools* in its different editions, as a rigid teaching method or as a manual for the art of teaching, it is more fitting to consider it as a witness to experiences that are localized in time and space. The animating principles themselves had to be adapted to new circumstances with the understanding, however, that today's set of principles would yield place to another set tomorrow. This evolution of educational methods demands consideration because

principles of a former time subsequently abandoned might well reveal worthwhile values for a future not easily predicted.

The **metal pen** replaced the quill and then came the ball-point to revolutionize the early learning stages of writing. The writing techniques described in the *Conduct* still have a certain value for anyone who wants to train pupils for artistic writing and prepare their still supple hands for correct positioning to make those precise movements which are a prelude to exercises in design drawing considered to be very useful in everyday life. Nonetheless, the disappearance of the quill liberated the many long teaching hours devoted to its use—hours which now can be applied to new disciplines. **Typewriting** and **computing** have opened up horizons hitherto unknown. The teaching of either of these can take inspiration from the *Conduct* by linking it with an improved study of spelling just as teachers of earlier days used the writing exercises as a means of teaching pupils how to avoid faults in word usage or in grammar.

The increased number of classes together with the reduction in class numbers to ensure a better homogeneity, has rendered the work of teachers much easier and simplified their class preparation. Thus, they are able to be freed from former teaching methods that were too fastidious to be really useful. Each teacher, each pupil can now feel more free to take initiatives suited to circumstances or even to a sense of imagination or creativity.

The 1720 *Management* required a teacher to be silent, to use signs and even to make use of a small instrument called a *signal* in order to avoid having to speak. This silence of the teacher led to that of pupils in a class of sixty divided into several ability levels. This system originated from the fatigue of a teacher who spoke too much at a period when tuberculosis and pulmonary illness ravaged the population. But with medical progress and the improvement in the salubrity of classrooms, the system is no longer so necessary. The need to awaken the curiosity of children and to encourage them to express themselves personally while working in small groups can replace a silent class with a buzzing but industrious hive without it being seen as an intolerable disorder.

Modern audio-visual instruments are much more interesting and efficacious than huge pictures placed on the walls, though the use of the former need not prevent the use of the latter.

In **catechesis** direct contact with not only the Gospels of Sundays and feasts, but still more with the *Bible* and not just Bible stories is assuredly of better value than the parroting of the catechism by simple question and answer, even when all words and expressions are carefully explained.

In today's school milieu where believers and unbelievers are together, catechesis can no longer be carried out as in the time of Louis XIV. Then, daily assistance at Mass was not a rare exception. Every baptized child was regarded as having an undeniable faith in the divinity of Christ and in his Resurrection. Christian education at school could rely on initial foundations in faith to develop subsequently the full range of Catholic doctrine. It is no longer the same these days. Ethics as

generally lived out in today's France no longer has the same foundations. A sense of morality, and civic virtue, need to be developed among all, Christians and non-Christians alike. This requires an on-going reference to what is called the natural law, that is to say, to the laws of conscience which stem from the very nature of man. This was how **Jules Ferry** explained the situation when he introduced his plan for secular instruction allied with the development of courses in morality and civics. The religious dimension, however, must not be ignored under either aspect. It is not a social reality of trifling importance for the non-Christian who has quite an interest in being acquainted with it and learning how to respect it. For him to discover a Christian religious culture, to become aware of the role of prayer, of love of God, of the nature of the Revelation which a Christian believes is to pave the way for an easy engagement in **fraternal** dialogue without which the word **tolerance** lacks human warmth. Instead of proceeding in catechesis as if adherence to revealed truth can be taken for granted, it would seem necessary in the context of today's society to begin with a process of **information** as to the nature of the Christian faith, God's gift given through Jesus Christ and transmitted through the Church. Non-believers can understand that accepting the testimony of the Gospels and thereby entering into a personal relationship with God **is not foolish** and that faith demands the **free assent** of our intellect and will.

The catechetical process then can double as instruction or religious **culture**. This, on the one hand, allows for the study of different religions, and on the other hand, as a catechesis properly speaking, which prepares for a Christian life by the adherence of heart and mind to dogma, morals, and worship along with the frequentation of the sacraments. This Christian life evidently cannot be imposed from outside, for it does not result from mere knowledge but springs from personal conviction.

It is regrettable perhaps that **history**, **geography**, and **empirical sciences** and all that goes under the name of "awakening disciplines" did not form part of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle's work, except in so far as required by the demands of reading and writing and not otherwise. Indeed, the general populace of his day the majority of which was little educated, needed several more generations before it reached a stage of experiencing even a minimum of intellectual curiosity. Future editions of the *Management* intended for their grandsons and great grandsons would allow these latter to become proficient in these new subject areas.

2. Enduring elements of Lasallian pedagogy

To think that the *Management of Schools* (1720) envisaged total conformity from one region to another would be wrong. There were holidays left to the initiative of parishes, towns, wine-growing or harvest regions. The time of daily Mass depended more on the goodwill of parish priests than on the wishes of the teachers. When La Salle took charge of schools in the South, he wrote to Brother Gabriel Drolin who

was then in Rome and was organizing his school as he thought proper: "It will be difficult for me to send you a Brother in Rome, as long as I have not organized a novitiate in Marseilles" since **men from this province** are needed because of the difference between the language here and that of the rest of France.[1] Similarly, the *Rules of Christian Decorum* far from being presented as rigid and unchanging directives offer the advice that great account should be taken "of what is customary in the regions where people live" for, often "what is unbecoming in one area is considered polite in another."[2]

The reproach sometimes made against the 1720 edition of the *Conduct of Schools* that it gave stronger emphasis to **logical** rather than **psychological** methods implying that these were more suited to adults than to children does not have a strong foundation. It would have been correct if the children of the masses in the time of Louis XIV—a king declared to have reached his maturity at the end of his 13th year—were psychologically and sociologically identical with today's children. But such was far from being the case. The 17th century regarded the child as a "little man."[3] Among the masses particularly, the 10 - 12 year old child was often beginning to help his parents by looking after his young brothers and sisters at home, delivering goods made in the family, setting up stores in his artisan father's workshop or in his mother's shop, after getting them from the suppliers. With a reduction in class time and Thursday completely free, as well as the weeks for the grape harvest or principal crop, an important amount of leisure time was available for the child to begin "earning his livelihood" at least to some extent. For working families, there were no such things as paid holidays nor pleasure trips. Hence, in this situation, to use teaching methods suitable for today's unlettered adults by applying them to 17th century youth remains both psychologically and sociologically correct.

But there is more to be said. La Salle gave great emphasis to the psychological observation of children. The *Management of Schools* has a basic requirement that each child's character, irrespective of age, should be studied. The teacher takes this psychological analysis into account when organizing his own teaching methods. He does not develop a theory of childhood, but a psychological means to adapt a universal pedagogy to as many particular cases as there are children.[4]

This systematic observation of children of school age was not without important results. While childhood was scarcely regarded as a specific age at the time of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle, it came to be regarded in the course of the 18th and 19th centuries as a period of distinct growth that could no longer be regarded as adult.

This was brought about by the development of schooling in the world of the masses to the extent that Aries was able to state that it was the school which made childhood. Lasallian pedagogy was no stranger to changes in the behavior of adults towards children.

La Salle was convinced that pedagogical virtue was to be found in the golden mean as his own Latin teachers would have explained to him. That virtue cannot really exist unless practice is joined to theory. The good teacher, he pointed out,

must link zeal with meekness, vigilance with generosity.[5] He must know how to avoid on the one hand being "too lax and too careless" and on the other "too hasty and too eager."[6] When correcting, he knows how to be charitable, reasonable, and calm. He has recourse to correction only when he has ensured that the offender admits his faults.[7] He acts in such a way that his zeal for secular subjects does not divert him from his duty of consecrating to God a certain amount of time in prayer to obtain "the science of the saints" and the art of securing the same grace for his pupils. So that his desire for perfection in his own spiritual life does not prevent him from giving all the time needed for his preparation for class, his efforts of an inverse order in favor of secular subjects are not less to be dispensed with.[8]

When Lasallian pedagogy sanctions the division of each unsolved difficulty into as many separate parts as possible in order the better to understand what has to be studied, it is remaining true to a rule of universal value described in Descartes' *Discourse on Method*. Thus, reading is learned by beginning with the exact identification of each letter then with the correct sound of each syllable and ultimately of each word. Later, reading sets about distinguishing the "pauses" that is to say the rhythm of sentences. The child advances from the simple to the complex, from the particular to the general, from the easy to the difficult but for the analysis required at the outset, it is the teacher who brings it about. This he does by choosing graduated exercises which significantly simplify the child's task who is quite happy to be able to say or think "This is easy." Synthesis comes later but it is never neglected.

In similar fashion where it is a matter of explaining the catechism by means of questions and answers, it is the sub-questions in Socratic style which set the child on the way to experiencing the delight of finding the right answer. A story developed analytically prepares the listener to answer a question demanding a synthetic understanding of the principal idea that needs to be retained. In fact, La Salle wanted the teacher to begin by indicating the subject of the lesson, or in other words, the general theme that is to be explained. He then wanted him next to question the children on what they knew among themselves before having the right answers repeated for those less well informed.

The lesson ended with an overall **review** which allowed for the suggestion of a **pious practice** or virtue to be carried out that very day or the next day, and which would be recalled to mind at the examination of conscience in evening prayer.

Surely, today, one might prefer to use a different approach, beginning for example with **observations** from daily life or from the realities of the secular world from which to initiate a Christian reflection even if it transcends the material world everyone knows. If this approach is adopted for a group of children who possess little or no faith and for whom Divine Revelation remains *a priori* inaccessible, it would appear otherwise for children brought up in Christian families. For these latter Revelation went without saying; and for their children the method of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle led much more quickly and with less doubt to a growth in the love of God already stirring in their hearts. In the first instance, (using La Salle's approach), the child advances from **ignorance** to knowledge, while in the second case, the child advances from **love** to knowledge and thence to a greater

love. A marked difference exists between religious **information** and a **formation** to the Christian way of living imbued with love and prayer.

Many other elements of **enduring value** are to be found in preceding chapters. Each one of us in accord with his tastes and his experience can easily refer to them. It would be a pity, however, if one were to seek from Lasallian pedagogy, merely a list of practical details still capable of being implemented today, just when its primary interest arises from a **new look** directed towards the **vocation of a Christian teacher** which determines his way of acting and demands a formation suited to the greatness of his mission.

NOTES

1. *Les lettres de saint J.-B. de La Salle*, critical edition of Brother Félix-Paul, Paris, 1954, p. 156 (July 1712).
2. CL 19, *Preface* (p. 5) and p. 62.
3. Philippe Ariès, *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien régime*, Paris, Plon, 1960, chap I. Les âges de la vie, p. 369, "durée de l'enfance."
4. CL 24, p. 236 "Des bonnes et mauvaises qualités des écoliers."
5. *Recueil de différentes petitstraités, 1711.* CL 15, p. 6.
6. CL 15, p. 96.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129 et *Méditations pour les fêtes*, CL 12, pp. 158,264, 273.

EPILOGUE

With John-Baptist de La Salle and the first Brothers of the Christian Schools, a deep stamp was imprinted on the world of education. Pedagogical methods were adapted to large classes, attention was paid to the person of each child and teachers were formed in accord with the requirements of the "ministry" to which they were called.

In the 19th century, numerous female as well as male Congregations were inspired by the *Conduct of Schools* and the teaching methods of the Brothers. The latter did not adopt the mutual method extolled by the "Liberals" under Louis XVIII. The educational relationship would be too diluted without direct contact between the teacher and the pupils. But that did not stop them from confiding small groups of beginners to a more advanced pupil for a limited time.

The Normal School for Lower Seine started in Rouen in 1829. The residential school in Béziers began diffidently in 1830 on the lines of the boarding schools that the Brothers had created before the Revolution, demonstrating that they could develop pedagogical strategies beyond the primary stage. On 2nd May 1833, Guizot recognized in the Chamber that the Brothers' schools *"had brought about much good, and adopted the best methods, in a word, had played an important role in the progress of education"* (see Rigault, VI, 87). The Institute, re-established after the upheaval of the Revolution, seemed, to the authors of the law of 28th June, to be able to guarantee the possible organization of elementary education in France on solid foundations. Some Brothers were able to perceive the needs of their pupils and sought to respond to them in local situations before General Chapters of the Congregation brought the adaptations into line with the new social situation.

Subjects taught became more numerous and more diverse in the framework of both the communal schools and a number of new private schools. The teaching of history, geography and line drawing in primary schools was approved by the General Committee in 1834. Between 1830 and 1848, evening courses, which occupied the attention of the 1844 General Chapter, welcomed 48,500 workers. Boarding schools (like Passy in 1838) initiated "modern" secondary education. Agricultural education was fostered in the Likès in Quimper with its agricultural department since 1839. The Agricultural Institute of Beauvais opened in 1854. Technical education was provided in Paris from 1848 with an apprentices' center in rue Neuve-Saint-Étienne. The Francs-Bourgeois was a genuine commercial school. From 1842 till 1870, several hundred Brothers provided instruction, education and supervision in a number of prisons. The list of new areas into which the Brothers moved would be long. And for these, pedagogical manuals were adapted and written.

But this is not the time to think of following this evolution spread over several centuries nor the worldwide expansion of the works of the Brothers which

began in the middle of the 19th century and greatly accelerated by the suppression of the Institute in France in 1904. **The interesting question for today is to know who are the Brothers of the Christian Schools and what are they doing in France and in the world in the 1990's.**

The 20th century has witnessed the co-education of teachers and then of pupils spreading progressively almost everywhere. Today, 7,500 Brothers work in 85 countries shoulder-to-shoulder with more than 50,000 men and women teachers who are not members of their Congregation. More than 850,000 boys and girls have passed en masse from "the Brothers' school" to "the Lasallian school." The Brothers no longer have the sole direct responsibility for some establishments even when the Institute retains ultimate responsibility for their educational and Christian thrust. In France, this is called "supervision" and in Belgium "organizing power." This change has become possible as a result of the increasing number of persons sharing, in Lasallian schools, the spiritual and pedagogical current transmitted from Saint John Baptist de La Salle. These persons include educators, men and women teachers, catechists, parents of pupils and former pupils. Their formation is assured by means of meetings, training courses, and publications dealing with the history and pedagogy of the Lasallian Institute. Lasallian studies, begun in Rome in 1956, and highlighted by numerous Lasallian Centers over the last ten years, contribute to this formation. A certain number of Brothers form and accompany, in this way, adults who desire wholeheartedly to be Christian educators. In some countries, notably in the United Sates, some Brothers have specialized in "campus ministry" or chaplaincy to the students in Lasallian universities.

Although the term "university" does not denote exactly the same pedagogical reality in France as in other countries, it is good to know that in April 1992, the Institute Bulletin listed 73 Lasallian establishments which provide tertiary education for their students. Ten of them bear the title "University." Side by side with the superior schools of art and architecture (the Saint Luke Schools) in Belgium, let us mention the Bethlehem University. The first of the art schools was founded in Gand in 1863 and the University was opened in October 1973, at the instigation of the Pope, for Palestinians, without discrimination on the grounds of religion when the Yom Kippur war was raging.

A number of reviews, nourished by university research or by training colleges for teachers, play an important role in pedagogical and catechetical research. In France there was *Catéchistes,* then *Temps et Paroles* (Paris 1950-1979), and *Orientations* (Paris 1962-1975). Belgium had its *Revue belge de pédagogie* (Carlsbourg 1919 - 1940) which became *La nouvelle Revue pédagogique* (Malonne 1945-1975). In Italy there is *Rivista Lasalliana* (Turin since 1934) and *Sussidi per l'insegnamento della Religione* (Milan since 1936). Spain has *Sinite* (University of Saint Pius X in Salamanca from 1960, then Madrid) and *Educatores* (participation in the review of the Spanish Federation of teaching religious, Madrid). The United States has *La Salle Catechist* (St. Mary's College, Winona) and Australia had *Our Apostolate, a Catechetical Review*, now replaced by *Word in Life*....

Awarding the Lasallian Institute the Noma Prize in 1990 during the international year of literacy has recently emphasized that its pedagogy has continued to develop in response to basic needs in education (see Institute Bulletin, no. 234). From 1982 to 1990 "mobile school antennae," roving classrooms in vans, and the Kiko Reading method facilitated, in France, pre-schooling on the spot within the encampment for more than 5,000 gypsies. Today, twenty-one roving schools daily cruise the suburbs of various cities. It is over the airwaves that *Radio San Gabriel*, in Bolivia, carries on the work of popular education and promotes the wholistic welfare of the Aymara people who live on the high plateaus of the Andes. The radio programs and the formation of leaders have been entrusted to the Brothers since 1977. Especially in France and Spain, a number of Lasallian teachers have been trained in the Instrumental Enrichment Program (PEI) set up by Professor Reuven Feuerstein, from Jerusalem, to help young people and adults to develop their cognitive strategies. ***"Boys' Towns"*** could also be mentioned. These are villages for neglected youths who come to be trained for four years and who, with a few counselors, ensure the life of their small city. They grow their own food, maintain the central electricity supply and administer justice. These institutions, in the original of which the U.S. Brothers cooperated with the founder, Father Flanagan, were launched in Australia in 1940, in Sri Lanka in 1963 by a Frenchman, **Brother Hermenegilde**, and have subsequently spread to India. The Ramon Magsaysay Prize, in 1976, was awarded to Brother Hermenegilde "for public service rendered to society, especially youth considered useless up until that time" (UNESCO). Since then **Boys' Villages**, closer to peasant life have sprung up.

As a result of the Council, which asked all religious to re-write their rule of life, many things have changed in the life of the Brothers as they have striven to incorporate the intuitions of their founder into a world vastly different from the one he had known. This process led to the *Rule* approved in 1987. In the *Declaration, the Brother of the Christian Schools in the World Today* writes: "What is the meaning in the light of today's needs of traditional words like *schools* or *the poor?*... What is the meaning of religious consecration in today's world? What is the relationship of this consecration with the apostolate and the profession of the Brother? How shall we preach the good news of Jesus to peoples in various stages of belief and unbelief? How can we best respond to the appeals of peoples of developing areas, to the needs of the Missions?" (letter of presentation of 16th December 1976). Such texts cannot be summarized easily , but they inspire the daily life of the Brothers and the government of the Institute.

From now on, a General Chapter is to take place every seven years instead of every ten, the better to follow situations as they evolve. Brother Charles Henry, the first American Superior (1966-1976), adopted the custom of presenting his good wishes for Christmas, New Year and the feast of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle in the form of a pastoral letter, something less formal than a Circular. This has been followed by his successors. Several have dealt directly with the **educational action** of the Brothers, for example, the letters of Brother Jose Pablo (1976-1986) in 1979

on the educational service of the poor (15th May) and on the Christian school (31st December). The animation of the Institute as a whole is effected by means of Circulars (such as *Our Mission* no. 408, *The educational service of the poor and the promotion of justice*, no. 412), by means of themes for the year, like that of prayer (1995), of sessions of the International Lasallian Center (from four to eight months), of meetings of Brother Visitors or of formators of young Brothers.

The government of the Institute has become much more decentralized to favor a better adaptation to local realities. Parallel with this, there has been a grouping together of huge areas, to present, in each geographical zone, as complete a picture as possible of the presence of the Brothers. In France, the fifteen Districts (Provinces) of 1964 now make up the **District of France**, including Switzerland, Greece, Djibouti and the Island of Réunion. Other sectors of the Institute are in a growth stage. An example is Africa where the 366 Brothers who live there represent 5% of the Brothers in the world and one novice in three in the Institute is African. These **Young Churches** need solidarity with other Districts to respond to the needs for the development of a continent which is often forgotten by the political powers in the world. The International Lasallian Co-operation Service (SECOLI) facilitates twinning and travel which are valuable to teachers and young people who desire to become capable of *inculturation*.

The 25th successor of John-Baptist de La Salle, Brother John Johnston, is from U.S.A.; his vicar is from Guatemala; his councilors are from the Philippines, Australia, Burkina Faso, Spain, Switzerland and France. A catechetical work has given rise to a secular Institute, the *Union of Catechists of Turin*, approved in 1948. **Lasallian Sisters** have come into existence in Mexico (Guadalupan Sisters of La Salle, recognized as of pontifical right in 1976) and in Vietnam (recognized as of diocesan right in 1974). Lasallian fraternities, **Signum Fidei** and a **Lasallian Third-Order** without vows, take their full place in the Lasallian family. The gift that the Church received in John-Baptist de La Salle (Rule, art. 20) in the France of the 17th and 18th centuries is bearing unexpected fruits. As the theme of a Lasallian meeting (Rheims, 1989) stated, "The adventure goes on."

Let us finish this general survey by mentioning some beatified and canonized Brothers who show forth the dynamic for sanctity of the Lasallian heritage. **Saints**: Brother **Miguel,** Francesco Febres Cordero (Ecuador, 1854-1910) a highly-rated writer, academician and catechist of poor children; Brother **Mutien-Marie**, Louis Joseph Wiaux (Belgium, 1841-1917), a humble Brother who, after several difficult years, succeeded admirably with the senior boarders from well-off families; and Brother **Benildus**, Pierre Romançon (France, 1805-1862), Director of the first communal school in Saugues (Upper Loire), a wise educator and outstanding stimulator of souls.

Blesseds: Brother **Scubilion**, Jean Bernard Rousseau (1797-1867 born near Vézelay, thirty-four years in Réunion, catechist to the slaves and then to the freedmen; Brother **Arnold**, Jules Rèche (France 1838-1890) a noted teacher and venerated formator of young Brothers; martyred Brothers of the French and Spanish

revolutions... not to mention other Brothers whose causes for beatification are well under way, like Brother **Exupérien**, Adrien Mas (France 1825-1905), a teacher of literature and religion who enthused senior students, looked to the spiritual renewal of his Brothers and for thirty-two years was the esteemed councilor of four Superiors General; Brother **Alpert**, Chrétien Motsch (France 1849-1898), a teacher who gained the respect of students bigger than he was, much loved Director of the Paris school for those from Alsace-Lorraine, an ever active organizer in spite of creeping paralysis; Brother **Raphael-Louis** Rafiringa (1856-1919) the first Madagascan Brother, a writer of repute, member of the Madagascan Academy, the only religious on the Great Island when the missionaries were expelled in 1883 and 1885; he visited the Christian communities, sustained them and enlivened their prayer. His experience enabled him to write some pages, illuminating for the present time, on how to act when a person arrives as a missionary in a foreign land.

Yes, "the adventure goes on."

Brother Alain Houry
Director of Lasallian Studies
Easter 1995.

APPENDIX 1

(Cf. Ch.I of the 3rd part, note 4)
Some dates relative to the obligation of attendance at school

It is useful to recall that since 1560, the States General gathered at Orleans had heeded the nobility who asked that "parents be obliged to send their children to school under penalty of a fine" and even "constrained by the Lord and ordinary magistrates" (F BUISSON *Dictionnaire de pédagogie*, volume II, p. 2132). After the repeal of the Edict of Nantes, several decrees of Louis XIV were especially aimed at the Protestants who only submitted their children to the general law which bound all children living in France. Since the document is all too rarely quoted, here is the text:

> *"We... enjoin all fathers, mothers, guardians and other persons who are charged with the education of children and, by name those who profess the so-called reformed religion, to send them to stated schools... until the age of 14 years except for the case of persons of such status that they can and must have them taught in their homes by private tutors... We enjoin... judges... to punish those who may be negligent in fulfilling this obligation by imposing on them fines or the severest penalties."*
>
> (Declaration of the King *of the 13th of December 1698, article X, quoted in* Mémoires du clergé, *edition of 1771, volume I, column 983).*

It was to obviate these sanctions that La Salle adopted the gentler restraint of depriving absentees of the alms disbursed to the poor, working through the intermediary of the parishes. At present, the deprivations of Family Allowance has the same function.

APPENDIX 2

(Cf. Ch.3, footnote 11 of Part 3)
Memorandum on the reading of French

It was the Bishop of Chartres, Mgr Paul Godet des Marais, who was at the source of a Memorandum of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle on the pedagogical advantages of introducing the children to reading through the use of French and not of Latin texts as was the custom of those days. The Bishop, well aware of the success of the Paris schools in the parish of Saint Sulpice, began by asking for Brothers in all the boys' schools in the city of Chartres, but knew that he would have to wait until new teachers were trained. That is why in 1698 he did not raise any objections to blessing the chapel of the novitiate of the Brothers which had just been opened in the Vaugirard area. The next year, on the 12th of October 1699, seven Brothers were sent to open two schools in Chartres, in the parishes of Saint Hilaire and Saint Michael, but forming only one community. In each school, there were three classrooms, the seventh Brother looking after community needs and doing occasional supervision. The *French Syllabary* of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle had been well known since 1698. The Brothers of Chartres used it. The parish priests found difficulties with it and the Bishop expressed his desire to see the Brothers return to previous usages in the parish schools. La Salle explained his reasons to the Bishop. His biographer Blain has kept the "substance" of it for us (CL 7, p.375-376).

Initially written or spoken, this statement in justification of his procedure should be known in its entirety :

1. The reading of French has greater and more widespread usefulness than the reading of Latin.
2. The French language being the children's native tongue is beyond all doubt much easier to learn than Latin, since children hear one spoken and not the other.
3. Consequently, it takes a lot less time to learn to read French than to learn to read Latin.
4. The reading of French predisposes the person to read Latin; on the contrary the reading in Latin does not predispose one to read French; this is proven by experience. The reason is that it suffices, to read Latin well, to accent all the syllables and to pronounce the words well, which is easy to do when one can spell and read French. From this, it follows that persons who can read French, easily learn to read Latin; and that on the contrary it takes a lot of time to learn to read French after having spent time learning to read Latin.

5. Why does it take a lot of time to learn to read Latin? It has been said that it is because the words are foreign-sounding to people who do not understand the sense and that it is difficult to retain the syllables and to spell words whose meaning is unknown.

The 6th reason appears to have been omitted.

7. What use can the reading of Latin be to people who will not make any use of it in their life? Or what use can Latin be to the young people of either sex who come to the *free* Christian schools ? Nuns who recite the Divine Office in Latin need, in truth, to be able to read it well; but of a hundred young girls who come to the free schools there would hardly be one who could become a postulant in a monastery. Similarly, of a hundred boys who are in the Brothers' schools, how many are there who will study Latin in the future? Though there may be some, must time be spent on them to the detriment of the others?

8. Experience teaches that the boys and girls who come to the Christian schools do not keep coming for a long time and do not attend school for a sufficient time to learn to read both Latin and French. As soon as they are old enough to work they are taken away from school because they need to earn their living. Since this is the case, if they are taught to read Latin initially these are the problems that can arise:

> *They leave school before they can read French or read it well. When they leave, they can read Latin only very imperfectly and they forget what they have known in a very short time, and hence, it happens that they can't read either Latin or French. Finally, the most unfortunate consequence of all is that they hardly ever learn Christian doctrine.*

9. (On the other hand) when one begins to teach young people to learn to read beginning with French they can read more or less well when they leave school, and being able to read they can even learn Christian doctrine on their own: they can learn it in printed catechisms, they can keep Sundays and feast days holy by reading good books and by prayers well said in French, instead of being able to read only Latin—and that very imperfectly—when they leave the free Christian schools. They, thus, remain ignorant of the duties of Christianity all their lives.

10. Lastly, experience shows that nearly all men and women who do not understand Latin, who have neither the learning nor the use of the Latin language, especially common people and even more importantly the poor who come to the Christian schools, cannot read Latin and their attempts to read it are pitiful to someone who understands the language. So it is quite useless to spend a good deal of time teaching people to read a language if they are never going to use it."

This text is all the more important because it shows to what extent La Salle took an interest in the education of girls.

APPENDIX 3

(Cf. footnote 2 of Ch 4 of the 3rd part)

Under the reign of Louis XIV, the municipalities of cities, and the communes lost a part of of their former power to the advantage of Managers. In the case of Saint Sever, an important distinction was obvious. It was not a question of an independent commune and it was not a question either of the "City of Rouen" which was divided into four districts (the district of Beauvoisine, the district of Cauchoise, the district of Martainville and the district of Saint Hilaire) exclusively situated on the right bank of the Seine. The wall which surrounded the so-called city proper, separated it from the outer suburbs and "divides two different worlds." Saint Sever on the left bank had its parish church nine hundred meters to the south of the surrounding wall. A vast wooded space filled more by marshlands than by houses gave it a slight air of a country town. It was typically a "suburb." Hence, those who were native to the place were not subject in the first instance to regal justice unlike the inhabitants of the "city" but to seigneurial tribunals. Thus, everything that had to do with the goods belonging to churches, to religious houses, to groupings of those in the same profession such as schoolmasters, and even the civil rights of ecclesiastics, depended on the justice exercised, for Saint Sever, not by the *Parlement* of Rouen but by the Lord of the area who between 1698 and 1712 was François de Rohan, first Prince of Soubise (1630-1712), brother of Marie-Eléonore de Rohan, abbess of the Trinity of Caen, then of the monastery in the rue du Cherche-Midi in Paris (from 1669 to her death in 1681).

By law, the suburb enjoyed the benefits of townsfolk because the majority of the decisions of the mayor and the aldermen of Rouen held sway in matters concerning the city and its suburbs, but the zones for application of taxes were determined by the boundaries of the parishes; and those parishes of the suburbs were not included in the "parishes of the city" because their inhabitants, clergy included, did not "participate fully in the life of the city." Henry IV had particularly resented this division. He had dreamed in 1596 of "creating in the suburb of Saint Sever a new city" which would be "enclosed" like every really independent city, but this would have meant the relocation of numerous businesses and craftsmen's workshops, with the result that the project did not materialize. The Manager in the time of Louis XIV limited himself to requesting the "city of Rouen" to subsidize ferries for the workers who "lived near Saint Sever and who came to work *in the city.*"

Cf. Y. POUTET, *Le XVIIe siècle et les origines lasalliennes*, volume II, pp. 69-74 *(Les Municipalités et les écoles lasalliennes)*; Gerard HURPIN, *L'Intendance de Rouen en 1698*, Paris 1985, pp.69-85, no 34; Jean-Pierre BARDET, *Rouen aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, Paris,1983, volume I, pp. 63, 79, 88, 145, 246; quoting document G 7367 of the Archives of Seine-Maritime, the author has determined that the parish priest of Saint Sever was never considered as parish priest of the city (p. 81).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Since our priority was to give prominence to the *historical development* of pedagogy, it was important for us to respect, as far as possible, the *chronological sequence* of publications, each one of which was possibly inspired by those that preceded it. Nor were we allowed to forget that certain editions had their source material in earlier manuscripts whose publication sometimes followed the study devoted to them.

The *Cahiers Lasalliens,* CL, published by the *Mother House of the Brothers of the Christian Schools,* Via Aurelia 476, CP 9099, 00165 ROME constitute an irreplaceable set of documents on the work of Saint John-Baptist de La Salle. Considerable importance is attached to the manuscript sources that have been consulted; the bibliographies generally mentioned in them have not been listed below because they are easily accessible therein.

A. SAINT JOHN-BAPTIST DE LA SALLE'S OWN PUBLISHED WRITINGS

Exercices de piété, printed by Langlois, Paris, with the permission of Claude de Précelles 21st March **1696**. Cf. CL 48.

Syllabaire françois, printed by Langlois in **1698** without permission. Cf. CL 48.

Instructions et prières pour la sainte messe approved by Claude de Précelles, 16th January **1698**, printed before 1702 by Langlois. CL 17.

"Catéchisme des Frères des écoles chrétiennes," or *les Devoirs d'un chrétien envers Dieu par demandes et réponses*, in three sections, the third of which is a second volume entitled "Du culte extérieur et public." **1703**. CL 21 and 22.

"Deux abrégés du catéchisme ci-dessus": *Grand abrégé* for 1-in-12, *Petit abrégé*,, for 1-in-16 (the first contains 32 "Instructions," and the second, 9). **1703**. CL 23.

"Instructions chrétiennes" or *Les devoirs d'un chrétien envers Dieu et les moyens de s'en bien acquitter par discours suivi*, in one volume. **1703**. In duodecimo. CL 20.

Instruction méthodique pour apprendre à se bien confesser, printed with *Instructions et prières pour la sainte messe* approved 16 January **1698**. **1703**. CL 17.

Instructions et prières pour la confession et la communion, the manuscript for which was submitted for approval only on 14th January; approval being granted 23rd January **1703**. CL 17.

"La civilité chrétienne" in octavo, in letters "which imitate gothic script," under the title "*Règles de la bienséance et de la civilité chrétienne." 1703. CL 25.*

To the 1705 new editions, deposited in the Royal Library 6th August 1706, were added the following texts:

Psautier de David avec l'Office de la Vierge, in 18-mo, **1705** (now lost).

Cantiques spirituels, in duodeciomo, **1705**. CL 22.

The "Privilège" granted by Louis XIV to the book-publisher Antoine Chrétien, on 13th April **1705**, recorded ten days later in the *Registre* of the "Council of printers and booksellers" gives a complete list of these works and adds thereto *La Vie chrétienne ou les moyens de vivre chrétiennement* just before the *Psautier* and the *cantiques* (for which La Salle is the **editor rather than the author**) are mentioned. This *Vie chrétienne* is an integral item on the **list** of works published by Antoine Chrétien "**for use in the Christian schools**" (CL 22 *at the end*). We have been unable to find it.

Recueil de différents petits traités à l'usage des Frères des écoles chrétiennes, approval given in Avignon, papal territory, by Pierre de la Crampe, Dominican, and Pertuys, the Vicar General, in August **1705**. There is also one copy of uncertain date with 70 pages, and another copy with 260 pages dated **1711**. CL 15.

B. WRITINGS PUBLISHED AFTER J.-B. DE LA SALLE'S DEATH

La pratique du Règlement journalier. CL 25.

Règles communes des Frères des écoles chrétiennes, mss. 1705, 1718. CL 25.

Règle du Frère Directeur. CL 25.

Mémoire sur l'habit. CL 5 and 11.

Directoire selon lequel chaque Frère doit rendre compte de sa conduite. CL 15. An addition to the *recueil* said to be of 1711.

Directoire que les frères doivent tenir dans leurs voyages, CL 15. An addition to the 1711 Recueil.

Explication de la Méthode d'oraison. CL 14. Ms according to 1730 edition.

Méditations pour les dimanches et fêtes. CL12. Ms according to 1730 edition.

Méditations pour le temps de la retraite, or Méditations sur l'emploi. CL 13. Ms according to 1730 edition.

Conduite des écoles chrétiennes. CL 24. Ms of 1706 and 1720 edition.

Lettres de saint J.-B. de La Salle, critical edition by Brother Félix Paul, Paris 1954.

Mémoire des commencements. CL 10.

Mémoire en faveur de la lecture initiale du français. CL 10.

Règle du Formateur des nouveaux maîtres, an edition of *La Conduite des écoles*, by Brother Anselme, Paris, 1951, pp 305ff. According to the ms of 1706.

Mémoire: *Des différentes sortes de maison de cet Institut*, folio duodeciomo-13, of an Avignon manuscript (A.D. du Vaucluse, dossier H 1) Cf. Brother Anselme, edition of *La Conduite des écoles*, 1951, pp. 318-319.

Mémoire sur les fins de l'Institut des Frères des écoles chrétiennes. Some, for instance Father Joseph Michel, believed this to be the same as *ms 103* of the Archives of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (*Claude-François Poullart des Places*, Paris, 1962, pp. 325-328). Already as early as 1955, Brother Émile Lett expressed a similar point of view (*Les premiers biographes de saint J.-B. de La salle*, Paris, Ligel, p. 43). But brother Maurice-Auguste, on the contrary, preferred to attribute this *ms 103* to someone outside the Lasallian Institute (*L'Institut des Frères des écoles chrétiennes à la recherche de son statut canonique*, Rome, 1960, CL 11, p. 74). It seems to me, however, that the ms. entitled *Des différentes sortes de maisons de cet Institut* might just as well correspond with the *Mémoire* entrusted "at a moment's notice" to the Abbé Clément who wanted to know "the scope of the Institute" and its goals (CL 10, p. 113). This manuscript, kept in Avignon, is highlighted above.

Règles que je me suis imposées, CL 10, pp. 114-116.

Formule du vœu de fonder l'Institut "until the last survivor,"1691, CL 10, p. 116.

Formule des vœux perpétuels des Frères, 1694, CL 2.

Testament de J.-B. de La Salle, Rouen, 3rd April 1719, CL 26, pp. 286-305.

The *"dits" de saint J.-B. de La Salle* preserved by the first biographers, CL 10, pp. 153-213.

J.-B. de La Salle, *Œuvres complètes*, Paris, 1994, edited by Brothers of the Christian Schools, 476 Via Aurelia, CP. 9099, 165 ROMA, 1576 pages. This edition, prepared with the *Centre Informatique et Bible* of the Benedictines of Maredsous (Belgium) consists only of those texts published in the *cahiers lasalliens* nos. 12 to 25, together with the *lettres* published in Paris in 1984. That is sufficient to be able to speak of *Œuvres complètes*, although various manuscripts of *Mémoires* and "*paroles*" may not have survived. A computer information disk complementing the volume may also be purchased. The *Préface* is written by Brother Michel Sauvage.

C. BIOGRAPHIES, HISTORICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL STUDIES

The *Bibliographia internationale Lasalliana*, published in the *Rivista lasalliana*, no. 4 of 1993, contains 110 pages with 1166 articles, and is not exhaustive. So we have had to highlight only the basic biographies and works immediately related to the subject treated.

The chronological order is followed to allow for easy reference to works that most likely have made use of the most recent discoveries or reflections.

1. Before 1680.

1630 : BELLARMIN, S.J., *Catéchisme ou ample Déclaration de la Doctrine chrétienne*... translated by Fr Antoine Pagot, S.J. Douai.

1651 : EUDES Jean, *Jésus Maria. La Vie du Chrétien ou le Catéchisme de la Mission*, Caen.

1652 : GAMBART Adrien, *Le Bon partage des Pauvres sur la doctrine chrestienne*, Paris.

1654 : BATENCOURT Jacques de, *L'Escole paroissiale*, Paris.

1656 : DUTREMAN Philippe, *Le Pédagogue des familles chrestienne ou la manière de vivre chrestiennement*, Lyon.

1660 : TURLOT Nicholas, *Le vray thrésor de la doctrine chrestienne*, Paris. in quarto.

1662 : CERNÉ Simon (or Cernay), *Le Pédagogue des familles chrétiennes... Aux chefs de familles pour l'instruction de leurs enfants et de leurs domestiques, et à toutes sortes de personnes qui veulent vivre selon Dieu*... by a priest of Saint-Nicholas-du-Chardonnet of Paris.

1668 : DÉMIA Charles, *Remontrances à Mrs les Prévosts des Marchands, Échevins... de Lyon*, Lyons.

1674 : SÉLUTIVE Barthélemy, *Les sept trompettes*. A number of editions precede or follow the one above.

2. From 1680 to 1719

1682 : DÉMIA Charles, *Le Trésor clérical*, Lyons—a further edition in 1694.

1685 : BATENCOURT Jacques de, *Instruction méthodique pour l'école pariossiale*, Paris. Modifies and reduces somewhat the 1654 edition.

1688 : DÉMIA Charles, *Avis important touchant l'etablissment d'une espèce de séminaire pour la formation des Maîtres d'école*, s. 1.

1690 : FURETIÈRE Antoine, *Le dictionnaire universel*, La haye and Rotterdam.

1710 : RICHELET Pierre, *Nouveau dictionnaire françois*, Geneva.

1712 : BLÉGNY Étienne de, *Les eléménts ou premières instructions de la jeunesse*. Paris. There are other editions, as, for example, 1732.

3. From 1720 to 1900

Several re-worked editions of *La Conduite des écoles*, the progressive development of which is not part of our study. The texts of the 1705 and 1720 editions are found in CL20.

1721 : BERNARD (Brother), *Conduite admirable de la Providence en la personne du vénérable serviteur de Dieu, J.-B. de La Salle*. Ms. published in CL 4.

1723, then 1740 : MAILLEFER Élie, O.S.B., *La vie de Monsieur Jean-Baptiste de La Salle, docteur en théologie, ancien chanoine de l'église cathédrale de Reims et Instituteur des Frères des écoles chrétiennes*. Ms edited in CL 4.

1733 : BLAIN Jean-Baptiste (canon). *La vie de Monsieur Jean-Baptiste de La Salle*, 2 volumes, Rouen, 1733. Cf. CL 7 and CL 8.

1785 : AGATHON (Brother, Superior General), *Les douze vertus d'un bon maître, par Monsieur de La Salle... expliquées par le Frère Agathon, Supérieur général.* (Cf. . Rigault, VOLUME I, P. 589.)

1881 : COMPAYRÉ Gabriel, *Histoire critique des doctrines d'éducation*, 3rd edition, Paris, volume 2, pp. 293 ff.

1883 : LUCARD (Brother), *Annales de l'Institut des Frères des écoles chrétiennes*. 2 volumes, Paris.

1885 : CAULY Émile, *Histoire du Collège des Bons Enfants de l''Université de Reims*, Rheims.

1886 : PÉCHENARD P.L., *Histoire de la Congrégation de Notre-Dame de Reims*, Rheims, 2 volumes.

1887 : BUISSON Ferdinand and Collaborators, *Dictionnaire de Pédagogie d'Instruction primaire*, 2 volumes, Paris.

1895 : ALLAIN Ernest (Canon), *Contribution à l'histoire de l'instruction primaire dans la Gironde avant la Révolution*, Paris and Bordeaux.

4. From 1901 to the present.

1902 : *Les chapitres généraux des Frères des écoles chrétiennes*, Paris.

1909 : SCHOENHER P., *Histoire du Séminaire de Saint-Nicholas-du-Chardonet*, Paris, volume I.

1918 : SALINIS A. de, *Madame de Villeneuve... fondatrice et institutrice de la Société de la Croix* (1597-1650), Paris.

1919 : PANEL G., *Documents concernant les pauvres de Rouen*, Rouen, 3 volumes.

1922 : MAXIMIN (Brother), *les Écoles normales de saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle, étude historique et critique*, Brussels.

1931 : FERRARI Amalia, *La Pedagogia di S.G.B. de La Salle,* Milan.

1932 : HERMENT Jules, *Les idées pédagogiques de saint J.-B. de La Salle,* Paris.

1933 : FARCY (canon), *Les Sœurs du Saint Enfant Jésus dites de la Providence de Rouen*, Rouen. Another edition, 1938.

1933 : FARCY (canon), *Histoire ancienne et moderne de la paroisse Saint-Sever*, Rouen.

1935 : FARCY (canon), *Le Manoir de Saint-Yon.*

1937 and 1938 : RIGAULT Georges, *Histoire générale de l'Institut des Frères des écoles chrétiennes*, volume I, *L'œuvre religeuse et pédagogique de saint J.-B. de La Salle*, volume II, *Les disciples de saint J.-B. de La Salle dans la Société du xviii^e siècle*, Paris.

1944 : HERMENT Jules, *La Prière des éducateurs selon saint J.-B. de La Salle,* Brussels.

1951 : FITZPATRICK Edward, *La Salle patron of all teachers*. Milwaukee (U.S.A.).

1951 : Anselme (Brother), *Conduite des écoles chrétiennes par saint J.-B. de La Salle*... edited from the manuscript fs. 11759 of the National Library (Paris). This edition includes a few supplementary texts and pedagogical observations by the author, who was the Director of the Belgian Pedagogical Review.

1951 : CELSE-PIERRE, fsc, *Le Maître chrétien selon saint J.-B. de La Salle*, Paris.

1952 : APLHONSE (Brother), *À l'école de saint J.-B. da La Salle*, Paris.

1952 : HENRIQUE JUSTO (Brother), *Un precursor da pedagogia moderna*, Porto Alegre.

1953 and 1954 : HILLAIRET Jacques, *Évocation du vieux Paris*, 3 volumes, Paris.

1958 : GALLEGO Saturnino fsc, *La teologia de la educacion en san Juan Bautista de La Salle,* Madrid.

1960 : ARIÈS Philippe, *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'ancien régime*, Paris.

1960 : POUTET, Yves fsc, *L'enseignement de la langue française est-il redevable à saint J.-B. de La Salle de l'existence d'un nouveau syllabaire*> Châlons-sur-Marne, in Mémoires de la Marne. Republished in CL 48.

1961 : ALCALDE GOMEZ Carlos fsc, *El Maestro en la pedagogia de san Juan Bautista de La Salle*, Madrid.

1962 : SAUVAGE Michel fsc, *Catéchèse et laïcat. Participation des laïcs au ministère de la parole. Mission du Frère enseignant dans l'église*, Paris.

1965 : BARON Fernand fsc, *Contribution à l'étude de la pédagogie lasallienne. Le moyen pédagogique de la <<Réflexion>> religieuse. Historique et description des formes actuelles*, Rome.

1967 : DHÔTEL Jean-Claude, *Les origines de la catéchisme moderne*, Paris.

1970 : POUTET Yves fsc, *Le XVII^e siècle et les origines lasalliennes*, Rennes, 2 volumes, 786 and 448 pages kept in the FÉC Archives at Talence (33400), 134 Cours Gambetta.

1970 : CONGRÉGATION POUR LES CAUSES DES SAINTS, *Nicolas Barré... Positio super virtutibus ex officio concinnata*, Rome, Italian text apart from the writings of Fr Barré, which are in their original language, French.

1971 : GUTTON Jean-Pierre, *La société et les pauvres. L'exemple de la généralité de Lyon 1534-1789,* Paris, Les Belles-Lettres.

1972 : WÜRTH Othmar fsc, *La pédagogie de saint J.-B. de La Salle, Contribution à l'orthopédagogie*, Rome.

1975 : CONLON Pierre M., *Prélude au siècle des lumières en France. Répertoire chronologique de 1680 à 1715*, 6 volumes, Geneva.

1975 : SCAGLIONE Secondino and MARCATO Umberto, fsc, *Educatore cum Cristo. Teologia dell' educazione e orientamenti pedagogici in S.G.B. de La Salle*, Turin.

1976 : Poutet Yves fsc, *L'éducation de la piété du peuple après l'œuvre de saint J.-B. de La Salle au debut du XVIII^e siècle*, Besançon, republished in CL 48.

1977 : SAUVAGE Michel and CAMPOS Miguel, fsc, *Jean-Baptiste de La Salle. Annoncer l'Évangile aux pauvres*, Paris.

1980 : PUNGIER Jean fsc, *Comment est née la Conduite des écoles*, Rome.

1981 : POUTET Yves and PUNGIER Jean, fsc, *Un "educateur aux prises avec la société de son temps: Jean-Baptiste de La Salle*, Paris. Second edition; a third

edition was made in 1987, and the work (102 pages) has been translated into Spanish, English and Dutch.

1981 : AVANZINI Guy and collaborators, *Histoire de la pédagogie du XVII^e siècle à nos jours*, Toulouse.

1981 : POUTET Yves fsc, *Les livres pédagogiques de saint J.-B. de La Salle*, Bordeaux, article reprinted in CL 48, 1988.

1983 : DELUMEAU Jean, *Le péché et la peur*, Paris.

1985 : DELFORGE Frédéric, *Les petites écoles de Port-Royal, 1637-1660*, Paris.

1986 : BLUCHE François, *Louis XIV*, Paris.

1986 : CONGRÉGATION POUR LES CAUSES DES SAINTS, *Nicolas Roland... Positio super virtutibus ex officio concinnata*, Rome, text in French including most of the writings of Canon Roland, who was beatified 16th October 1994.

1986 : GALLEGO Satunino fsc, *Vida y pensiamiento de san Juan Bautista de La Salle*, volume I, *Biografia*, volume II, *Escritos*, Madrid.

1988 : CHICO GONZALES Pedro fsc, *Ideario pedagogico y castequistico de san J.-B. de La Salle*, Madrid.

1988 : BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE de Paris, *Répertoire d'imprimeurs libraires*, Paris.

1989 : GILBERT Roger, *Charles Démia (1637-1689) fondateur lyonnais des petites écoles des pauvres*, Lyons.

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1990 : BLUCHE François and collaborators, *Dictionnaire du Grand siècle*, Paris.

1990 : MORALES Alfredo fsc, *Espiritu y vida. El ministerio educativo lasallista*, 2 volumes. Santo Domingo, 672 and 617 pages.

1992 : POUTET Yves fsc, *Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle, un saint du XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, Beauchesne (3 parts: *the life, the cult, the saint in art*).

1993 : CALCUTT Alfred fsc, *De La Salle, a city saint and the liberation of the poor through education*, Oxford, 650 pages.

1994 : BEDEL Henri fsc, *Initiation à l'histoire de l'Institut des Frères des écoles chrétiennes. Origines 1651-1726*, Rome, FSC Mother House, the collection, <<Études lasalliennes>> no. 5.

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La prière de l'éducateur, coll. *La prière de tous les temps*, ed. C.L.D. Chambray-lès-Tours (37170), 47 Av. des Platanes, 1982, 96pp. Under the close supervision of Monsignor Giovanni PAPA, "Reporter General" for the causes of beatification and canonization in the Congregation for the Causes of saints, historical office: *Positio super virtutibus... (de) Nicolai Roland, sacerdotis fundatoris congr. sororum a S. Puero Iesu (1642-1678)*, Rome, 1986, in-4, 648 pp., 6 full page plates, text in French. Kept in the Sisters of the Child Jesus, 48, rue du Barbâtre (51000), Rheims (France).

Jean-Baptiste de La Salle, in vol.IX of *Histoire des saints et de la sainteté chrétienne*, Paris, Hachette, Le Livre de Paris, 1987. Edited by Bernard Plongeron and Claude Savart.

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