

EDUCATION

Vol. 2. No. 5 1987



MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE — HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

By Siúr Cabriní Ni Mhaoldomhnaigh, Uachtarán

Mary Immaculate College was founded in 1898 by Dr. Edward O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick, in collaboration with the Sisters of Mercy.

The successive attempts of the Commissioners — the National Board of Education — to provide trained teachers in adequate numbers for the new National Schools had culminated in the recognition of denominational training colleges under private management, supported by a grants system.

Two thirds of the teachers of Ireland were still untrained when in the last decades of the nineteenth century, Kildare Place, Baggot St. (later Carysfort), Drumcondra, De La Salle, Waterford, St. Mary's, Belfast, and Limerick were established.

In September 1901 Mary Immaculate College welcomed its first group of students, seventy-five females, ranging in age from eighteen to twenty-five. One third of the group ranked as second year candidates because they had already been assistant or principal teachers. Two years afterwards the number of students in the College was increased to one hundred and it remained approximately at that maximum until 1956 when the number registered was double that figure.

In the early days the academic life of all the Colleges was tightly controlled by the Commissioners through the agency of the Head Inspectors. From the very beginning we find objections being made by the Colleges to the range and extent of the programme, to the lack of consultation about their content and to the danger of "cramming". It was the policy of the Commissioners that Training College courses should cover not only all the subjects being taught at the time in the National Schools but also those that might possibly be taught in the future. The early examination papers indicate a total of eighteen.

A glance at these examination papers, set for the King's Scholars, as the students were generally known, makes one wonder how a programme so extensive could have been undertaken in a two year, and in some cases, in a one year period. More surprising still is the good standard of general education implied. While the courses examined have, in the main, a clearly defined functional orientation and the questions in general elicit factual responses only nevertheless scope is provided for the



Siúr Cabriní Ni Mhaoldomhnaigh.

student of good academic calibre. A few examples taken at random from the early papers will illustrate this:

1902: "Regarded as practical arts, reading, writing and arithmetic have no right to be classed together as co-ordinate elements of education". Discuss this statement and show how the educational values of the subjects lead to its modification.

1904: Discuss the propriety of allowing children to be punished by the natural consequences of their acts.

1905: By what means can feeling for the beautiful be cultivated in school.

1906: Distinguish between Arithmetic as an art and arithmetic as a science and explain why the latter is preferable.

English Composition includes such topics as
Bilingual Education
Military Genius
Influence of Cultivated Companions
Democratic Government

An examination paper in French appears in 1912.

Irish was not a compulsory subject but it had its place in the curriculum

from the beginning. A paper in Irish is included in the bound volume of the 1904 examination papers. Significant too is the fact that in 1905 the word "Programme" gives place to "Clár".

In 1910 the Commissioners showed some willingness to lighten the heavy burden imposed on the Colleges by an overcrowded schedule. One of the steps taken was the acceptance in principle of a third year course for the most competent students. This was intended to be an honours type linked with the University — the N.U.I. had been established two years previously. Sixty-four years were to elapse before the idea materialised!

The establishment in 1922 of our own Government brought a strong emphasis on the Irish language as a subject and as a medium of instruction. Apart from this the developments that took place in the Colleges in the early decades of the century were mostly concerned with structural and organisational changes. Financial problems then, as now, were no strangers to those involved in administration. A letter written in 1929 to the President of Mary Immaculate College by the President of St. Patrick's is refreshing. The author had represented Drumcondra, Carysfort and Limerick at a meeting with "the Ministry". He had this to say:

"I opposed everything, the reduction of the grants, the removal of the bonuses, the withdrawal of the technical grants. I did this for a purpose, not that I had any hope of success, but by way of opening up the minds of the Minister and others to things that may come on. The Minister admitted that the whole cause of any change in the grants to the Colleges arose out of the desperate state in which the Government finds itself and pleaded very humbly for agreement with him in his efforts to help the Government in the present crisis. Things are very serious and if money is not got somewhere and that at once, the Government cannot function without having recourse to increased taxation".

1929 or 1987?!

The thirties and forties were, quiet, predictable years. Not so the decades

MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE

following. These were marked by unprecedented national development. In the aftermath of World War II a new interest in Education was palpable, an interest that eventually led to the revolution of free education, Comprehensive and Community Schools, Regional Technical Colleges and, pertinent to all levels, syllabus reconstruction. An ongoing evaluation took place of the aims, objectives and methods of classroom teaching. The demands created by the new sociological patterns now emerging and by a society becoming increasingly technological in its orientation influenced the entire spectrum of educational activity from primary school to University.

The Primary School Curriculum, (still known as the New Curriculum) appeared in 1971. It was based on a deeper understanding than hitherto of the developing child. Each child, it demanded, should be valued as a person and provided with the kind of variety of opportunity that would make for development at his or her own rate. Children would now be encouraged to play a more active role in their own education. Self-reliance, confidence and flexibility of mind were to be cultivated through individual and group activity which, for a significant part of the school day, would replace the older type of class teaching.

The key to the success of all this was of course the teacher. Technical aids, new curricula, new teaching methods, all of these were dead things unless touched to life by the teacher. In a word the role of the teacher needed to be altered radically. This was quickly recognised by the Colleges. In the sixties and seventies Mary Immaculate College provided study trips abroad and seminars and conferences at home for the staff. Students were introduced to teaching methods in line with the new approaches and educational psychology and sociology were seen as necessary and highly rewarding support subjects.

In the academic areas specialisation was introduced with the advent of what was known as 'elective' subjects. This meant that instead of being obligated to take a number of subjects students were now given scope to specialise in areas of particular interest to them. The College was becoming increasingly student centred.

Hand in hand with the progress just outlined went enormous physical expansion. New buildings as well as extensions to the old were added in quick succession to accommodate an increasing number of students — a number which in 1980 reached eight hundred, male and female, for co-education had been introduced in 1969. Extensions included a new residential block, a spacious, well-stocked library,

lecture theatres, language laboratories, a closed circuit T.V. Studio, an Education resource centre, a computer centre, creative arts areas, a new physical education and sports complex and student lounges. And yet a member of the 1901 group should still feel at home in the College for the original building stands with the confident assurance of its essential contribution to the character of the whole.

The changes that had been taking place over a number of years were gradually preparing the way for the new departure of 1974. In that year Mary Immaculate College became a Recognised College of the National University, offering a three year B.Ed. degree course. This step presented a new and exciting challenge: It was essential that the College should remain true to its basic purpose and to its acknowledged traditional strengths while at the same time recognising the indispensable benefits of a liberal academic education which would provide meaning and direction for the utilitarian aim. A delicate balance had to be achieved so that the B.Ed. might be an integrated degree in which each element would play an essential role towards the ultimate objective: the education of primary teachers. The balance, it is acknowledged was satisfactorily achieved but the entire story of the link with the University is another chapter.

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MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE AND THE N.U.I.

By S.A. Ó Broiméil, Cláraitheoir

Prior to the link with the National University the College had developed considerably on University lines. Naturally, Education, and in particular the teaching practice area, was of the utmost importance to the College but the academic subjects had developed considerably, no doubt partly due to the very high academic calibre of college entrants. In the final year of the old two year programme students took Education, Irish, English and another academic subject of their choice. In this period there was one link with the University whereby final year students, who took a second academic subject of their choice, qualified for First Arts.

Over the years there were many discussions and recommendations about the possibility of awarding degrees to those students studying to be primary teachers. Then in September 1970 the Higher Education Authority issued its "Report on Teacher Education". The question of the training of primary teachers had been referred to the Authority by the then Minister for Education in January 1969, but the Authority felt that it should concern itself with the problem generally rather than in relation to any particular group of teachers. In its report the Authority recommended that (i) the training course for all primary teachers should be extended to three years and (ii) with a re-structured course a syllabus of suitable academic and pedagogical content should be pursued which would lead to the award of a primary degree. The report further recommended that the degree at pass and honours level should be a B.Ed.Sc. and that the awarding body should be the Council for National Awards (subsequently the N.C.E.A.)

Subsequent to the H.E.A. report and the report of the committee established by the Department of Education to deal with the H.E.A. report, Mary Immaculate College held informal discussions with University personnel with a view to linking the College with the National University of Ireland. The decision of the Department of Education to lengthen the training period to three years and to initiate formal discussions with the University authorities, gave Mary Immaculate College the opportunity to negotiate with the National University through University College, Cork.



S.A. Ó Broiméil.

Negotiations with U.C.C. were conducted most amicably. They were conducted at two levels, firstly at College Administrative level and subsequently at College Departmental level. The policy of Mary Immaculate College was to ensure that its future graduates would maintain the College's long tradition of professionalism in teaching and at the same time be on equal terms with graduates of other university colleges in the academic disciplines.

The negotiations were successfully concluded and Mary Immaculate College became a Recognised College of the National University of Ireland. The first cohort of the new three year degree programme students entered the College in 1974 and became the first B.Ed. graduates in 1977.

The College was satisfied with the structure of the B.Ed. degree which it had negotiated. Students are required to take four subjects in their first year, Education and Irish being obligatory and two other subjects from the following: English, French, History, Geography, Philosophy, Mathematics and Music. In second and third year students are required to take Education and one of the other three subjects which they studied in first year. Teaching practice is an integral part of Education and carries a third of the marks allocated to that subject. For the award of an honours degree an A or B grade in teaching practice is also required. Honours are awarded on an aggregate basis combining Education and the academic subject.

Honours B.Ed. graduates may proceed to the M.Ed. Graduates with a pass degree may do so through the M.Ed. qualifying examination. Graduates with an honours mark in the academic subject may proceed to the M.A. through the M.A. qualifying examination.

The relationship between Mary Immaculate College and the National University and particularly with University College Cork has been most co-operative and beneficial. Two N.U.I. diploma courses were negotiated, first the Diploma in Catechetics and then the Diploma in Philosophy and these have been conducted very successfully for a number of years. The College would like to offer further University courses, particularly in the Humanities, to cater for the needs of the mid-west region. The College would feel it its duty to make its resources and expertise available in the national interest and particularly in the interests of students who would otherwise be denied a place due to the current economic difficulties.

The College is satisfied with the role that it has played in Irish Education since its foundation in 1898. It is particularly pleased with its success as a Recognised College of the National University of Ireland and it looks forward with confidence to its future in the Higher Education system.

College Library and Education Complex.



**Mr. Richard Stokes, College Technician,
CCTV Studio.**



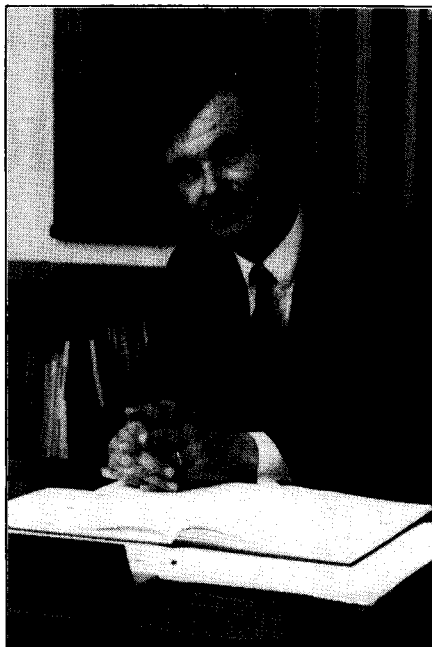
EDUCATIONAL STUDIES IN THE B.ED. DEGREE

Dr. K.R. Byrne, Head of Education

The introduction of the new three-year Bachelor of Education Degree in 1974, which displaced the traditional two-year certificate for national school teachers as a basic requisite qualification for teaching primary school, was a significant junction point in the history of Irish education. The new degree represented a new phase in the professionalisation of the teaching service, and at the same time, it was an overt official acknowledgement of the importance of primary education. In the Irish educational system the primary school had been taken for granted over generations, and as is often the case in these matters, a good job was expected of primary-school teachers simply because a good job had always been done, and this very often against stiff odds. By the early '70s, however, in a climate of prolific educational reform the primary school became a target for scrutiny and the outcome, both implicit and explicit, was the recognition that primary education was the cornerstone of any well-founded education system and it must be, therefore, accommodated accordingly. Any neglect of that basic and obvious (even if often overlooked) tenet is to put the future prosperity of a nation's educational enterprise at risk.

In that regard it is to the quality of teaching that one must attach an overriding priority and it is in that particular context that so much responsibility resides with colleges of education. Happily, Mary Immaculate College of Education responded to that challenge, matching traditional commitment with a new sense of urgency and imagination in addition to an insightfulness into the ever changing role of the teacher.

One is always left, of course, with questions of definition regarding that very role, and the quest for concise and precise definitions has occupied the mind of many educators the world over for centuries. The very nature of the question, it will be agreed, makes any such precise and concise answer virtually elusive. There are, however, a number of basic criteria that must form a fundamental part of any such definitive framework. Teacher education is an education for a profession. A teacher is to be regarded as a learned person qualified to teach, that is to practise. That practice is an enabling act towards the pupils' own individual learning. A teacher is required to bring to bear on the art of teaching his/her own learnedness, creat-



Dr. K.R. Byrne, Head of Education Department.

ivity, experience and pedagogical strategy to assist and encourage pupils to organise and sustain their own means of learning. The teacher must lead by example, for this is the main means by which pupils will be motivated over the longterm.

The Bachelor of Education Degree in structure and content is designed in such a way as to take stock of these aspirations. It is a professional degree with the aggregate of all its subcomponents directed and committed to the production of good teachers, that is, creative practitioners.

In the area of education, which is the wellspring of the degree, there are two major components conventionally described as Theory and Practice; put another way, the Why and the How of teaching. In some narrowly conceived views of teacher education the link between the Why and the How is not often given due emphasis. Consequently, the art of teaching is reduced to a mechanical and unimaginative exercise which concentrates superficially on the craft skills of teaching and which is, therefore, nothing more than an imitative experience lacking in inspiration, originality and vitality, one in which the intellectual spirit is traded away for mediocrity.

In the preceding paragraphs the words Art and Creative have been employed deliberately. There is a strong sense in which teaching may be regarded, if its context is properly understood, as a creative art. It is demanding of inspiration, experience, humanity and an inner eye; in the art of its presentation, that is the expression, there must be a mastery of the craft, in the skills sense of that word, and there must be those factors which include imagination, perception and control. More than anything else there must be growth, for teaching in common with other art forms has no point of excellence beyond which one cannot go. In other words one cannot say that this is the single best way to teach a lesson or that this is the single best lesson that will ever be taught. In that regard all solutions are provisional, there is another plateau.

It is for that reason that a clear and cogent link between Theory and Practice is so vital. All practice is blind

without theory and all theory is muzzled without practice. Any attempt to construct a hierarchy is mistaken; each component has an equal if different contribution to make and, as already stated, such is the value of an aggregate degree.

It is in the teaching, and at undergraduate level in the teaching practice, which is an assessed work experience, that the sum of all the ingredients will gradually become manifest. This will include the intellectual maturity of the student teacher aided by a study of the main academic subject, to be properly understood in the philosophical sense, coupled with a sound sense of education and practical application derived from an integrated study of education theory and practice. Here is the critical test where all the elements foregather and interfuse to inform the pedagogy.

The growing importance that is now attached to primary education and the high calibre of the students attracted to teaching has resulted in an increasing number of graduates proceeding to postgraduate work and this clearly attests to the value of the Bachelor of Education Degree. At Mary Immaculate College graduates with a minimum honours degree (second class grade 2) have direct access to the Master of Education university programme. This commitment to postgraduate work at present differs sharply from that of the past where such a qualification was often used as an exit strategy from teaching towards what was regarded as promotion. Today's postgraduates, however, are motivated principally by the intrinsic value of the postgraduate

programme in addition to the contribution it will make to their professional development. A postgraduate degree is no longer for the fireside pedagogue, it is rather the mark of the dynamic professional continuing to grow in that capacity. In this context, it may be well to remember that teacher power rests on teacher virtuosity.

For the past thirteen years the Education Department at Mary Immaculate College has been fortunate enough to participate in the new order of things as new fortunes were domesticated and fresh ambitions brought into view. The tradition of almost a century of involvement in teacher education provided the ballast for such a testing challenge, for the manner in which it contributed to a self-concept and a self-confidence, a sense that is wary of frills and eager for innovation, all of which is reflected in the commitment to the further development of the undergraduate programmes, while also concentrating on the cognate areas of curriculum development and in-service.

The Curriculum Development Unit of Mary Immaculate College was established to promote and undertake research into the curriculum and methodology of the primary school. The projects which are conducted under the auspices of the Unit are of three principal types:

1. The design and implementation of curricular programmes in areas which do not currently form part of the standard curriculum. These programmes are monitored and evaluated during the pilot phase with a view to assessing the suitability of

curriculum content, teaching methodology and resource materials. It is envisaged that such research will form the necessary basis for the introduction of such curriculum initiatives on a national basis.

2. The investigation of different aspects of the established primary school curriculum in order to evaluate its effectiveness, to identify constraints to its proper implementation, and to propose approaches aimed at overcoming these problems.
3. The development of resource materials which will support teachers and other professionals in implementing all aspects of the curriculum. Projects undertaken by the Curriculum Development Unit include Primary School Development Education Programme, Primary School Science Project, Computers in the Primary School and Micra-T Reading Test.

The extension of satisfaction at what has been achieved is not enough, however, and the three Rs of progress — record, review, revise — are firmly kept in view. The most widely acknowledged reform that is necessary is the addition of a fourth year to the undergraduate programme. It is not that a fourth year is needed towards the inclusion of further content. It is rather a case of providing for a study programme and undergraduate experience that is not in any way hurried or forced but one which provides for reflection, the greater cultivation of a critical sense with ample time allowed for the **process of becoming a teacher** towards which any Bachelor of Education Degree must unequivocally aspire.

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AN GHAELIGE BHEO I GCOLÁISTE

By Siúr Redempta Ní Mhathúna, Ceann Roinn na Gaeilge.

"Sister, do you ever speak in English?" Bhí faobhar sa ghlór, faobhar sa cheist. Baineadh an-gheit asam, mise a rá leat! Clapsholas a bhí ann sa tslí nár aithin mé an cailín a léim chugam ón ndoircheacht. B'ábhar machnaimh dom an cheist údach — creid nó na creid — b'ábhar dóchais dom í. Ná cáinimis an cailín sin a bhí ag éamh go pianmhar ó chroí cráite. Bíodh tuiscint againn di agus do lucht léinn eile dá leithéid ar éilíodh orthu ardchaighdeán eolais ar an nGaeilge, fad ar múchadh iontu grá don teanga agus, amanta, don chultúr Gaelach chomh maith.

Bimis dóchasach áfach. Tá an teanga bheo i réim fós. Cé go dtagann lucht léinn isteach chugainn sa Choláiste (grád A ní B bainte amach acu), agus col acu leis an nGaeilge, atá, dar leo, ina hábhar leamh, an-leathan nach cumas dóibh a labhairt ná a thuiscint i gceart, tagann sluaite eile chugainn agus a mhalairt ar fad de dhearcadh acu. Is aoibhinn leo an Gaeilge, saibhreas binn na teanga, doimhneacht iontach na litríochta is ársaíocht uasal ár bhfrámhacha. Bíonn labhairt agus scríobh na Gaeilge go breá acu agus iad meáite ar an gcultúr Gaelach a chur chun cinn go spleodrach. Ghealfaidís do chroí is d'anam le Gaelachas beo. A leithéidí siúd a choiméadfaidh an Gaeilge beo amach anseo, le cúnamh Dé.

Sa chéad bhliain den Chéim B.Ed. déanann an lucht léinn uile an Ghaeilge mar ábhar. Ina dhiaidh sin bíonn rogha acu. Más mian leo ábhar acadúil eile a roghnú, cuirtear an Ghaeilge Ghairmiúil ar fáil dóibh mar chúrsa ina bhfaighidh siad buneolas daingean ar an teanga, idir labhairt agus scríobh, agus seans acu an teanga bheo a shealbhú is a fheabhsú go taitneamhach trí dhrámaí beaga a scríobh is a léiriú. Tá sé riachtanach pas a fháil sa chúrsa sin chun cáilíocht mar bhunoide a bhaint amach. Ach, mar mhealladh dríosaithe bíonn Teastas, nó Teastas le moladh, le fáil acu siúd a léiríonn cumas fiúntach sa teanga.

Iad sin a roghnaíonn an Ghaeilge mar ábhar acadúil, tugann siad seacht dtréimhse i gcaitheamh na seachtaine ag plé leis an gcúrsa

ilghnéitheach atá leaghta amach. Gan amhras cuirtear béim ar chruinneas, ar líofacht is ar shaibhriú na teanga le cleachtadh sa Teanglann, sna ranganna dramaíochta is comhré agus sna díospóireachtaí agus cainteanna poiblí. Déantar cúram speisialta, ní nach ionadh, den obair scríofa — chuige sin aistí, ailt, aistriú, miontráchtas agus Irisleabhar Gaeilge 'Scotshmaointe' a chur i gcló. Ina theannta sin, déantar staidéar ar gach gné den litríocht ó Ré na Gaeilge Clasaicí i leith idir phrós, filíochta le béim speisialta ar an Mhiotaseolaíocht agus ar scéalta na ríthe. Chun chur leis an taighde tá tarraingt ag an lucht léinn ar iliomad leabhar agus áiseanna nua-aimseartha na leabharlainne agus is breá leo aoichainteoirí a bhíonn istigh againn go minic.

Tugann an Cúrsa eolas dóibh, méadaíonn sé a sium sa taighde, géaraíonn sé a mbreithiúnas agus neart buanna eile nach iad. Tá tuilleadh ag teastáil, áfach, chun an Ghaeilge bheo a láidriú is a leathadh. Is ansin a thuigimid tábhacht na n-imeachtaí spreagúla a chuireann an Cumann Gaelach ar fáil — Lá Gaelach, Seachtain Ghaelach, Cláracha Raidió, Comórtais eagsúla, Céilithe, Oícheanta Ceoil, Díospóireachtaí, 'Slógadh an Choláiste', Liotúirge don Aifreann Gaelach gach Luan agus mar sin de. Meallann an Cumann Dramaíochta slua den lucht léinn chun an mianach atá iontu mar aisteoirí, léiritheoirí, moltóirí agus eile a thástáil agus, i ngan fhios dóibh féin, saibhríonn siad a gcuid Gaeilge go ceolmhar. Daoine a bhfuil bua na hamhránaíochta acu, is geal leo an Cheardlann amhránaíochta is an t-eolas breise

ar chúla na n-amhrán is ar theicníc an tsean-nóis. Méadaíonn taisteal tuiscint agus tugann Coiste Bhord na Gaeilge sa Choláiste spreagadh is tacaíocht don lucht léinn chun páirt a ghlacadh san Oireachtas, i 'Slógadh' i 'Scór' agus i roinnt scoileanna Éigse agus eile. Dála an scéil, b'iontach an sásamh a fuair cuairteoirí chugainn ón mBiúró Eorpach do Theangacha Neamh-Fhorleathana as léiriú de 'Scór' an Choláiste cúpla mí ó shin.

Sa tobar a fhaightear fíorghlan uisce agus is sa Ghaeltacht a bhlaiseann lucht léinn mílseacht aoibhinn na Gaeilge i gceart. Le blianta anuas tá dlúthcheangal fiúntach, tarraingteach idir Coláiste Mhuire gan Smál agus na Gaeltachtaí - iad sin i gCúige Chonnacht, i gCo. na Mí, in Oileán Chléire agus, go háirithe, i gCorca Dhuibhne os rud é gur Muimhnigh formhór mór ar n-aos léinn. Téann siad ann mar dhaltáí mar ábhairidí, mar cheannairí is mar mhúinteoirí. Bailíonn siad leo siar arís chuig seiminheáir is cúrsaí, nó amanta eile ag obair sa Ghaeltacht nó ag campáil is ar saoire. I mbliana i Mí an Mhiethimh bhí sé de phribléid ag an gCúrsa d'ábhair oidí sa Dara Bliain lá ionlán sa tseachtain a thabhairt sna bun-scoileanna Gaeltachta. Bhain siad an-tairbhe go deo as an scéim nua seo, pé 'cu iad ag breithniú, ag múineadh nó ag foghlaim ó na páistí. Is léir go bhfuil na cúrsaí ag dul ó fheabhas go feabhas idir ranganna agus imeachtaí tráthnóna is oíche. Bíodh a bhuíochas sin ar an Roinn Oideachais, ar Roinn na Gaeltachta, ar na Comhar-chumainn, is ár lucht stiúrtha na gCúrsaí ach, go speisialta, ar mhuinir na Gaeltachta a thugann uatha go fial an saibhreas uasal is dúchas dóibh. Diaidh ar ndiaidh, blaiseann an lucht léinn an draíocht seo agus is iad a bhíonn díocasach chun tuilleadh a shú isteach. Tá seoid ghléineach curtha os a gcomhair acu, 'Mystique' na Gaeltachta dulta go smior iontu — an Ghaeilge bheo, ár gcultúr beo, ár n-oidhreacht bheo.

LIBERAL ARTS STUDIES IN MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE

By Dr. John Hayes, Head of Philosophy Department.

"A university experience could be the guide either to a professional career or to an enlightened life, or both".
(Robert Hutchins)

In 1977 the Colleges of Education for Primary School teachers graduated their first classes with degrees of the National University of Ireland after a three year course. Prior to 1977 students of the Training Colleges received the N.T. certificate after an intensive two-year course.

The difference in emphasis between the two qualifications, in intention at least, can perhaps be seen in the change of name attached to the institutions offering the two courses viz. from "Training College" to "College of Education". Whereas the emphasis in the old program was practical and vocational, under the present system there is a structured attempt to graduate not only competent teachers knowledgeable in the "hows" of educating children but also in the "whys" of current educational practice. More deeply still, there is a stress now on educating the would-be educators themselves to the highest contemporary standards. In line with this latter emphasis, Mary Immaculate College has built up its Liberal Arts programme very considerably since 1974.

While it cannot be denied that, in practice, the old Training Colleges educated men and women who have been for generations, and will continue to be for quite some time, forces for enlightenment of incalculable influence in this country, the old N.T. course was by common consent very compacted. The course did not allow the leisure — the Greek for which provided the root for "school" — that intellectual maturing requires. In addition, the Training Colleges lacked formal links with the University, which is the institution primarily charged in civilised society with maintaining and developing our traditions of enquiry.

Indeed, it may have been chiefly because primary teachers themselves sensed the need for the link between their training and university education generally, and articulated that need through their union, that a formal link was finally brought about in 1974 through the recognition of the B.Ed. degree by the N.U.I. With the degree came a more extended training period and a course less exclusively orientated to practice.

The first effect of the link with the university was that the staff of the College was organised into the following departments: Education; English; French; Geography; History; Irish; Mathematics; Music; Philosophy; and Religion. While there was a small nucleus of staff to man some of these departments, an intensive recruitment drive was launched which more than doubled the number of college academic staff.

With the exceptions of Education and Religion, where there are no cognate undergraduate courses in the university, each department offers a three-year programme modelled on the B.A. programme for the subject in question. The standard set is half way between Pass and Honours B.A. In general, students can qualify for M.A. studies in the academic subject they have brought to B.Ed. level by sitting the B.A. (Hons.) examination in that subject in the University where they wish to pursue post-graduate studies.

All of this has brought the College

closer to the mainstream tradition of higher education. It did so, however, at a time when the Liberal Arts tradition has come under scrutiny mainly, but by no means exclusively, on the issue of "relevance". Relevance can refer to the practical application of a body of knowledge to a specific career, or to the personal development of a student, or to perceived social problems, or to the general progress of knowledge, or perhaps to some or all of these.

In the controversy about the issue, such concerns have been portrayed as poorly met by the classical tradition, neo-classically expressed by J.H. Newman in *The Idea of a University* (1852), in which the Cardinal argues that theoretical education — "taking a view of things" is at the heart of liberal (and Catholic) education. Yet while it is true that this tradition sees the central task in higher education as helping the student finds himself conceptually in relation to what is deemed excellent in the human past and in prospect of man's best hopes for the future, it is no part of this view to denigrate practical concerns, social problems, evolving knowledge or non-intellectual skills. The Graeco-Roman

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In the Music Studio with Mr. Noel Kelly.

THE CREATIVE ARTS IN MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE

By Mr. Evan Morrissey, Head of Art Department.

The case for the Arts as legitimate ways of knowing ourselves and responding to the world around us has indeed been well made. Their inclusion in the revised curriculum for the Primary School in the early seventies was a clear recognition of this important fact. The ready acceptance of, and the demand for these areas was illustrated by their early development as main elective subjects. The advent of the B.Ed. for Primary Teachers however strangely resulted in a setback for the Arts — with only Music — a long established discipline in the college since its foundation, being granted elective subject recognition by the N.U.I. Since then the remaining arts areas have had to develop under the aegis of the Education Department of the College.

Within the Art Department there is an enthusiastic commitment to advancing the Visual Arts to a pivotal position within the Primary School Curriculum, and we are indeed gratified to see so much enthusiasm for art amongst many of our undergraduates. All students in their first and second year receive a basic course in Art/Craft to enable them to at least provide a skeletal framework for Art learning programmes within the Primary School. Given that such a high percentage of our undergraduates have not received any exposure to Art in second level schooling, this is not always an easy task. In the third year an elective course is offered to provide a more indepth study of the Pedagogy of Art, with more realistic opportunities for "hands on" experiences of media and process. To date this elective has proved to be highly popular and goes some way towards providing the kind of expertise necessary to put Art on a reasonable footing within the Primary School.

Art Department facilities have been significantly improved in recent times



Mr. Michael Byrne, Ceramist, Artist in Residence, at work in the Ceramic Studio.

to accomodate and indeed attract this new enthusiasm. These facilities include studios for Craft, Painting, Print,

Ceramics and Photography, and these facilities are also heavily used for extra curricular activities by an active Art Society. An Artist in Residence scheme in conjunction with The Arts Council has been an exciting development this year. Michael Byrne ceramist has occupied the residency. This profitable arrangement has enabled students and staff alike to visit the ceramic studio and consider work in progress and generally benefit from the presence of an Artist at work within the college environment. Undergraduates in the third year Art Education option have also had the opportunity of working with the Artist in Residence on a ceramic project with considerable benefit for their teaching skills in the future.

The Drama Department, building on Mary Immaculate's tradition for theatrical performance, has emphasised in recent years the pioneering place of drama in the education of young people.

Through workshops student teachers are given opportunities to develop their dramatic skills and to be enriched through encountering drama in all its various forms. As a result of these experiences students not only acquire skills and techniques which facilitate the development of drama within the curriculum but also better appreciate the part drama and the other arts play in the growth of children.

Theatrical performances of a variety of dramatic material are an important

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Pastoral work in one of the Houses.

Mr. Evan Morrissey discusses a project with an Art Student.



MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE

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part in the dramatic education — the range includes Synge, O'Casey, Beckett, Friel, Murphy, Dance Drama, Multi Media Shows, etc. The regular visits by National and Regional theatre companies such as T.E.A.M., Graffiti, Rough Magic, Theatre Omnibus etc., establishes a healthy dialogue with the community of the theatre.

As befits a College of Education, school and library based projects are a regular feature for those students who choose the special 3rd year Drama in Education option — theatre in education programmes, dramatised readings and integrated projects being regularly used.

The presence of Mary Nunan as Dancer in Residence has contributed greatly to a concern for and an appreciation of dance as a creative expressive force in education. The informed enthusiasm and personal commitment of so many educators are heartening evidence of the increased utilisation of drama as an educational force.

From its foundation Mary Immaculate College has recognised the import-

ance of music as a subject of the Primary School Curriculum. Formerly, music was obligatory for candidates entering the College and all students took the final examination papers.

This was changed with the advent of the B.Ed. course. All students still take a course on the teaching of music in the primary school and music is also offered as a main elective degree subject. Liturgical music is also given special attention.

Music occupies a central role in the life of the college. Students are afforded ample opportunity to participate in musical activities formally and informally, and all are welcome to use the facilities which are centrally located on the College campus.

The number of students taking the subject to degree level has risen steadily over the past ten years. This is partly due to the increase in the number of students doing music for Leaving Certificate but it also reflects the relevance that music has to the lives of young people today.

Those staff members of Mary Immaculate involved in the Arts face

the future with great hope. The success of our Artist in Residence Scheme, and the provision of an evening course **Towards an Appreciation of the Arts**, are but two welcome innovations, and it is hoped to provide for an **Arts in Education** diploma in the near future. We do detect a small increase in the number of entrants to the College who have taken one or more of the arts as part of their post primary education. We would actively encourage those considering teaching as a profession to include the Arts in their subject choice. Indeed it is a pity that so many schools still appear to encourage the more academic subjects to the exclusion of the Arts. This limited view needs expansion and schools should be encouraged to provide arts experiences for all pupils as valid elements in a complete education.

With this technological age, which we are now experiencing, and the opportunity for increased leisure that this provides, the need for the Arts as complementary and supportive elements for the well being of the human spirit has never been greater.

Liberal Arts Studies

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"Liberal Arts", seven in number, were the mental abilities required of a liberated man as opposed to a slave. The freeman, by virtue of his freedom, had corresponding social and political obligations. He could not fulfill these duties unless he knew how to speak and write accurately (Grammar); think cogently (Logic); express himself persuasively (Rhetoric); has acquired numeracy (Mathematics — as represented by Arithmetic and Geometry); become acquainted with science (as represented by Astronomy) and be aesthetically sensitive and expressive (as represented by Music). All of this presupposed a programme of physical education and pointed towards a grasp of personal values that would withstand the temptations of power, fame, money etc., that can attach to public service or more generally positions of influence and trust.

Such a curriculum is now embryonic the birthright of every child; indeed, it can be an instrument in the battle against the more subtle slaveries of our own day whether in politics or economics. The child can be introduced to it only through a teacher who has

been honed in its spirit. While literacy and numeracy remain cardinal in the battle for human liberation, in the intervening millenia since the Liberal Arts were first enumerated, disciplines and sub-disciplines, mainly scientific, have spawned practically without number, and at never such a rate as in our century. Specialisation has become a necessity. And so it is that the modern scholar has to find the whole world in a narrowly defined area, difficult though that is. Our students are now being offered specialist courses in accordance with modern necessities but it is to be hoped that they would also find the broader view of things in their studies that Newman advocated — for surely such orientation is what the young adult needs so that he can fulfill himself and his social obligations. More specifically, though at another level, there is the curious fact that a theoretical training appears to be proving more adaptive for the student who in our age is having to re-learn his specialised subject several times in the course of his career than a rigorously practical approach.

The College, staff and students, have received much from the university in

widening its horizons and deepening its approach to education. On the other hand, the expert knowledge of the educational process resident in the college has over the past ten years pointed to certain areas where the college might wish to develop but where the university lacks expertise. Strangely enough, these areas were already educationally esteemed by the Greeks. Our college has expertise in both physical and aesthetic education which the N.U.I. hardly recognises formally at all. Areas like the Fine Arts; Drama; Dance have perhaps suffered through the lack of correspondents within the university. On the other hand, though the university has copious expertise in the sciences, no physical or biological science subject at all is offered in the college at the present time.

No doubt the future will bring expansion on the solid foundations now laid where the needs arising out of narrow pedagogy and professional orientation are firmly set in an educational tradition that seeks to do justice to mind and body, theory and practice, professional competence and philosophical maturity.



Children at work with Dr. G. Enright in Computer Centre. Included, bottom right, overall winner in LOGO World Competition, John Farragher.

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

By Dr. G. M. Enright,
Head of Department of Mathematics and Computer Studies.

The Department of Mathematics and Computer Studies at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, is heavily involved in teaching and research activities concerning applications of microcomputer technology in primary schools. During the past five years it has provided a selection of pre-service and in-service courses for primary teachers and has undertaken a major programme of experimental research with local school children.

TEACHERS' COURSES

A comprehensive introductory course is available to all student-teachers in the College during which a range of computer applications is presented and explored. A similar course is offered to practising teachers in the College's Annual Summer School. Through this provision students and teachers are introduced to the programming languages BASIC and LOGO and are given the opportunity to experiment with and to critically evaluate software packages in a variety of subject areas. A unique initiative of a one-year evening course leading to the award of a Diploma in Computer Studies was launched in 1985 and has proved to be

a valuable provision for teachers who wish to examine these applications in more depth.

Conscious of the need to ensure that its teaching in this area is based on the real experience of children in the classroom, this department is constantly involved in experimental work with Limerick children and in association with Limerick schools. Two research projects of this kind are conducted under the auspices of the College's Curriculum Development Unit.

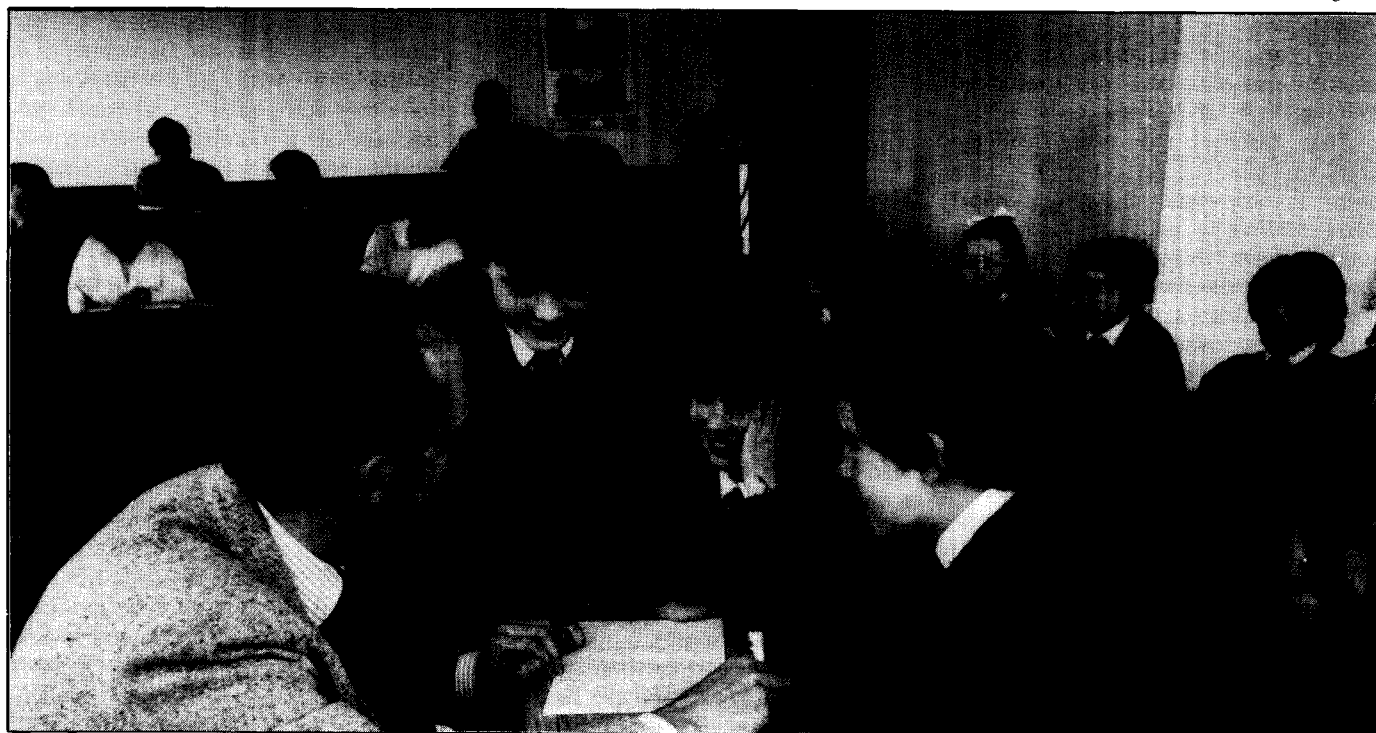
RESEARCH PROJECTS

One of these projects is on the use of LOGO, a computer programming language which is considered to be particularly suitable for children. This is

a three-year study of which two years are now completed and it involves a control group and an experimental group from the senior classes of a nearby school. The children were tested in reasoning skills and general mathematical knowledge. It is expected that the mathematical content of the LOGO language will contribute to the development of important concepts in geometry, algebra and number while the children will simultaneously develop independent programming skills. Evidence may be obtained of the potential of LOGO experience to accelerate the development of formal thinking and, of course, there is the important dimension of testing the appropriateness of a particular methodology for the use of microcomputers in the classroom.

Another project, conducted over the past two years with a group of children from a special class in a socially disadvantaged area, was recently completed and its observed results are very encouraging. Children normally

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Microteaching with Peadar Ó Croimín in the CCTV Studio.

MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE AND INSERVICE EDUCATION

By A. O Dubhghaill, Director, Inservice Education

In many countries the inservice education of teachers now takes its place in a system of permanent education where it is generally perceived as necessary to compensate for the inevitable lacunae in the initial education and training.¹ Pre-service education and training, no matter how effective, can only be an initial preparation for a lifetime of teaching where a foundation is provided upon which inservice subsequently builds. Rapid social, economic and technological changes increase the demands and pressures on schools and create new and continuing difficulties and problems for teachers. In the Report of the Committee on Inservice Education it is affirmed that the role of the teacher has changed fundamentally so that the teacher of today is no longer expected simply to service an educational system, but increasingly to shape and renew it.²

Inservice education is essential, therefore

(i) for newly qualified teachers, because of the inevitable inherent deficiencies of the initial training period.

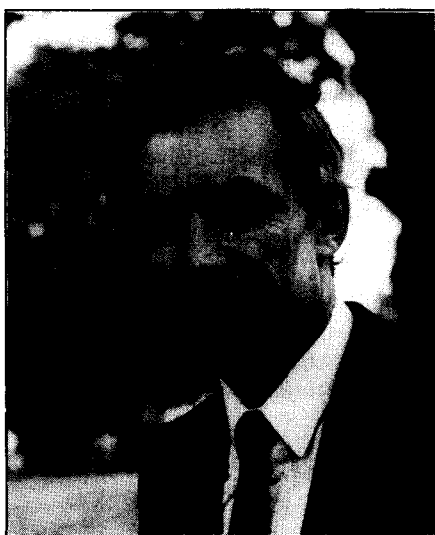
(ii) for teachers who find it difficult to cope with the changing circumstances of the classroom;

(iii) for teachers who wish to update their skills and thereby improve their classroom effectiveness by familiarising themselves with new educational developments, techniques and insights, and finally

(iv) for teachers eager to acquire further qualifications or specialised training.

That teachers themselves feel the need for inservice education has long been acknowledged by the support given voluntarily by them to summer courses down through the years. For many years these summer courses of one or two weeks duration were provided by the Inspectorate of An Roinn Oideachais and by other agencies at different venues throughout the country. In lieu of attending these summer courses, teachers are awarded extra personal vacation days. However, the concentration on these short summer courses during the first week or two of July in no way satisfies the need or demand for inservice. It is important to realise that only 40%, approximately of the primary teaching force attend such courses.³

It is generally accepted that the present inservice provision in this country



Antóin Ó Dubhghaill

is uneven and unco-ordinated and that the limited resources which are provided for inservice are not necessarily reaching the areas of greatest need.⁴ Inservice education appears to be the most suitable means of ensuring the correct implementation of the curriculum and the most effective way of eradicating staleness and improving teaching standards in primary schools. Innovative programmes which are necessary in the context of curricular changes, new methodologies and the changing motivations and attitudes of children will fail without this inservice provision. Since the existing structures are indisputably inadequate to foster and sustain the extensive expansion and development necessary, a country-

wide network to regulate, co-ordinate and develop the inservice area locally and nationally is eagerly awaited.

Mary Immaculate College, with its long established involvement in the initial training and education of primary teachers, has been and will continue to be, in an excellent position to make a significant contribution in the area of inservice. In setting up an Inservice Department a number of years ago, the College formally committed itself to a policy of expansion and development in this area and now considers its inservice activities as an integral part of its overall function in training primary teachers and subsequently reinforcing and supplementing that training.

The College Inservice Department has, for many years, organised seminars and courses for teachers and each summer holds a Summer School at which a wide range of courses of theoretical, curricular and practical interest is offered to hundreds of primary teachers from all over the country. A number of these courses are residential. In addition to the courses on College campus, the Inservice Department, in co-operation with Teachers' Centres and other agencies, provides courses for teachers at a number of outcentres. In the absence of funding from An Roinn Oideachais all the courses are, of necessity, self-financing.

Through inservice provision by the College in such areas as Science in the Primary School, Development Education, Curriculum Alignment in English: Primary to Post-Primary, teachers have become interested and involved in curriculum development. The results of the research subsequently undertaken by the teachers working on the above projects are disseminated through ongoing inservice courses. In conjunction with the Mathematics Department an inservice course in Computer Studies in the Primary School leading to a Diploma is offered annually.

The College boasts a significant amount of expertise in the realm of

MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE

remedial education and for more than a decade a part-time course in Remedial Education, focusing on all aspects of learning disability, has been offered to teachers from all over the region. The course, which is conducted every Saturday from October to May, is limited to 50 teachers. Participants attending this course travel weekly from as far away as Waterford, Galway, Birr, Tralee.

Beginning in the next academic term, the College proposes offering a two-year part-time course for teachers of children with special learning needs. This course is specifically designed for teachers of mildly and mentally handicapped children in special schools and special classes in primary schools. The course, which is sanctioned by An Roinn Oideachais, will lead to the award of a Diploma in Special Education.

The Inservice Department is particularly committed to supporting the young teacher in the first year or two of employment and would welcome an official induction programme for such teachers where problems and needs arising during this induction period could be satisfactorily reviewed during inservice sessions. If such inservice provision for these young teachers could be systematised then College pre-service courses could be made more effective and more flexible in the knowledge that they were being recognised as being the first stage of a continuous process of professional education.

In the belief that a significant part of inservice should occur in the schools where entire staffs could be more actively involved in reviewing the progress of their schools, developing curricula, devising teaching techniques and solving problems which arise, the

Inservice Department aspires to sending individual members of College staff or teams, to advise and assist schools in policy planning, drafting programmes and working out suitable teaching strategies. Arising out of discussions with directors of Teachers' Centres in different parts of the country, the Inservice Department is particularly anxious to respond to the needs and demands of teachers serviced by these centres.

The College views its involvement in inservice as a two way exercise benefiting both College and teachers. The Inservice courses provide the College with a base for a continuous review and re-appraisal of their pre-service courses. Through an inservice dimension there exists a mechanism for channelling ideas from the field to College faculty so that the College pre-service programme can be assuredly more relevant to the present needs and problems of the teachers.

The attempts on the part of the College to provide a suitable inservice programme in response to the increasing needs and demands of teachers, are hampered by the ambivalent attitude of officialdom. While Governments have expressed support for inservice the situation at present is that provision of inservice appears to have declined.

As well as establishing a proper countrywide inservice network other important related issues must be considered:

(1) Present regulations governing participation of teachers in inservice should be modified. The possibilities of day-release, block-release and sabbatical leave for teachers eager to avail of inservice, should be considered. In view of the increase in unemployed young primary teachers, the Government is presented with an opportunity

of utilising these young teachers as replacement for the systematic release of other teachers to attend inservice courses.

(ii) The certification and validation of inservice education must also be addressed. Certification should be controlled on the basis of achievement, performance, attendance and duration of courses. An examination system and the awarding of credits should be built into the system thereby providing a means for teachers to improve their rating within the profession while acquiring extra qualifications. Proper validation mechanisms should be established involving the College, An Roinn Oideachais and other relevant agencies, both statutory and non-statutory.

It would be regrettable, therefore, if the further essential developments in inservice were curbed by financial constraints and lack of funding from Government sources. Even in these times of financial stringency one of the most effective and, at the same time, economic ways of catering for the necessary development of inservice, so as to ensure the continuous extension of professional expertise among primary teachers, would be to supplement the existing resources of the College. The College would then be in a position to extend its inservice provision in pursuance of fulfilling its basic obligations towards the teaching profession in today's world.

1. Reguzzoni, M. "European Innovations in Teacher's Inservice Training" in Lomax, D. (Ed), *European Perspectives in Teacher Education*. John Wiley & Sons, 1978, p.178.
2. Report of the Committee on Inservice Education. Stationery Office, Dublin. 1984, p.10.
3. Ibid. p.4.
4. Ibid. p.28.

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MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE AND THE MID-WEST REGION: ADULT EDUCATION

By Mr. D. Blake, Philosophy Department

Mary Immaculate College has, over the years, been involved in adult education. Good teachers never cease to be learners and inservice courses for them are an integral part of the College programme. However, in the past eight years or so, there has been an expansion into adult education in areas other than inservice. The academic departments are now offering various forms of courses in addition to their regular degree programme.

First in the field was the Catechetics Department. Eight years ago the College negotiated with the National University for the sanctioning of a **Diploma in Catechetics**. Since then the Department has been offering intensive two-year courses in Theology, Scripture and Catechetics. The Diploma, which is conferred by the NUI, is an accepted qualification for the teaching of Catechetics for recognised teachers. While the Diploma is mainly for teachers, primary and post-primary, it has always attracted a reasonable number of non-teachers.

In 1982 the Philosophy Department followed suit. Again the College negotiated a **Diploma in Philosophy** with the National University. This was not a post graduate course but was open to all matriculated students. An intensive academic course, covering the traditional areas of philosophy, it has consistently attracted large numbers. Like the Diploma in Catechetics, the standard has been very high with many of its graduates going on to full-time university study. One attraction of the Diploma in Philosophy is that a student scoring above a certain standard is entitled to an exemption from Philosophy in the First Arts Examination in University College Cork — a significant reduction in the workload of a person taking a night degree.

With the setting up of the Riomhlann or Computer Centre, the College was in a position to offer a **Diploma in Com-**

puter Studies. In 1985 a one year course especially for primary teachers was launched. It was the first course of its kind in the country as it was concerned almost exclusively with computer applications in the primary curriculum. The College has been conducting pilot projects with local schools over the past few years and this research forms the basis of the course.

The course has been very popular since its inception, in spite of the heavy demands made on the participants both in terms of time and work. It has already begun to produce a new generation of teachers who are using computers in the classroom. Many of them are continuing their research in co-operation with the College.

As well as these work intensive courses leading to some form of university diploma or professional recognition, there is also a series of courses which are not formally assessed and are open to all regardless of qualification. The **Certificate in Modern Literature I** and the **Certificate in Modern Literature II**, are a series of lectures and seminars dealing with contemporary English and Anglo-Irish literature. A notable feature of the course has been the inclusion of lectures by well known literary figures.

The course coordinator of **Teastas Coláiste i Nua Litríocht na Gaeilge** is himself a well known figure in contemporary Irish literature. Padraig

Breatnach is the author of several books and is regarded as a pioneer in Irish prose. The constituency for this course is smaller as it assumes a fair fluency in Irish, but it has received steady support since its inception.

The **Certificate in Adult Religious Education** aims at training parish teams in lay ministry. Much of the work is practical and is conducted in small groups with an emphasis on self-development and personal growth. It has been extraordinarily successful and obviously is meeting a real need in the community.

As an alternative to the Diploma in Philosophy a new, less academic course, **A Taste of Philosophy** was introduced last year. Shorter than the Diploma course and requiring no academic qualifications, it dealt with issues like life after death, the existence of God, equality in society and so on. It proved very popular and will be continued this year with the focus on psychology. Subtitled 'An Exploration of the Self' it will include practical workshops in self exploration as well as lectures and seminars.

All of the preceding courses have been in existence at least a year but the academic year 1987/88 will see a veritable explosion of new courses, nearly all of them multi-disciplinary. The course in **European Studies** for example, draws on the College Departments of History, Geography, Art, Music, English, French, Irish and Philosophy, to examine various facets of the development of Europe over the last one hundred years. Also concentrating on the last one hundred years is the course in **Irish Civilisation** — another multi-disciplinary course, highlighting various aspects of the development of

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Irish culture. Again, lectures will be given by people from the academic departments whose specialisation is in the field of Irish, Art, Music, History and so on. Among the topics to be covered will be Gaelic Literature, through the medium of English; Anglo-Irish Literature; Folk Music, History; Art, etc. Involvement by the College with various historical and archaeological societies has given rise to a demand for a course on an **Introduction to Archaeology**. This will provide an introduction to the nature and methods of archaeology and will include some fieldwork.

Graduates of the Diploma in Catechetics and the Adult Religious Education course will be entitled to register for an advanced course in scripture and liturgy being launched this year also. Entitled **The Bible and the Liturgical Year** the course will consist of systematic scripture study, the relation of scripture to the Sunday liturgy, the nature of liturgy and the spirituality of the liturgical year.

Finally, there is a most interesting 'package' entitled **Towards an Appreciation of the Arts** offered jointly by the Art, Drama and Music Departments.

It consists of four modules each of seven weeks duration: Dance, Drama, Art and Music.

The Dance module is designed to develop skill in movement and in creative ability, to stimulate the senses and to develop aesthetic appreciation. This will be done through practical work in small groups. No prior qualifications are needed but participants must be prepared to take part in all exercises.

The Drama module is entitled 'Drama in Performance' and its objective is to enrich the participants' personal experience, skills, appreciation and confidence in working with drama. Various elements of dramatic experience will be explored through workshops, lectures, videos and theatre attendance.

The Art module will be an introduction to the appreciation of the visual arts. Elementary practical activities will be undertaken primarily as a means for understanding the different materials and media used in the visual arts. The mode of presentation will be through workshops for all aspects of the course, also lectures, discussions and visits to galleries where appropriate.

The Music module is concerned mainly with music appreciation. It will enable participants to increase their understanding of music and will help them to enjoy concerts and recitals more deeply.

The College Library forms an integral part of the adult education programme and has been one of the reasons for its success. The prospect of virtually unlimited access to such a wide range of printed and audio visual material is very attractive and people of all ages can be seen reading or just browsing in the library at all hours of the day and night.

The adult education programme has probably done more to widen our horizons within the College than anything since the inception of the degree programme and it has done more to make the College known and available to the people of Limerick than any publicity drive could ever have done. Mary Immaculate has graduated from being 'the training College' from whence students descended on the local schools twice a year to being truly a College of Education at the disposal of the whole Limerick region.

Computer Applications in Primary Education

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regarded as low achievers with short attention spans, little self-confidence and no interest in further education, were seen to be highly motivated at computer work. They had no difficulty in concentrating on LOGO designs for an hour and more as they worked out the mathematics required for the drawings they wished to produce. Language software was used with one group and the culmination of the project was the production of a class newspaper. This task involved a considerable amount of off-computer work in the planning and preparation stages, collection of material, interviewing people, writing stories and the compilation of the output from the wordprocessors into a suitable newspaper layout. The paper was subsequently sold within the school, at a nominal charge, and the children got great personal satisfaction from the enthusiastic response of their teachers and fellow pupils.

INTERNATIONAL WINNER

Mary Immaculate College took a bow on a world stage recently when eleven-year-old John Farragher won first place in the LOGO section of the International Problem Solving Contest organ-

ised by the University of Wisconsin. John was one of eighteen children of high ability in mathematics who were selected, after a screening process which involved all sixth classes in Limerick City schools, for a special eleven-week LOGO course conducted by College Staff. He was then entered for the national section of the LOGO contest, which was in the form of a two-hour practical examination held in Dublin. Having won at this level his work was sent to Wisconsin for ranking with that of 370 winning teams from other centres and he duly emerged as overall winner.

In addition to these formal courses and curriculum development projects there is a great deal of informal contact between the College and schools in the region and considerable support is available to primary schools wishing to embark on computer-aided innovations. Staff members visit schools where such work is going on not only to assist and advise but also to record these pioneering activities so that they may be shared with other teachers and with students. Teachers also bring classes to College where a wide range of hardware and software is at their disposal.

NEW DIPLOMA COURSE

Several primary teachers in the Mid-West are now holders of Diplomas in Computer Studies from Mary Immaculate College and this on-going activity has proved to be a very useful catalyst in the process of increasing knowledge about the role of computers in education and in encouraging experiment and practice. This uniquely designed and substantial in-service course has received enthusiastic response from teachers not only in Limerick but in all the neighbouring counties as well. Eighteen teachers received Diplomas in 1986 after the first cycle of the course and a further twenty-three have completed the course this year. The fact that they travelled up to sixty miles each way each week is a testimony to teachers' interest in development and commitment to renewal. Mary Immaculate College responds well to the needs of the Region. In the case of computer applications it believes that with a dual policy of teaching and research it can help to chart a course for the beneficial use of the latest technology in curriculum development and thereby contribute to the enriched experience of our primary school children.

MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE LIBRARY

By Mr. J. Power, Librarian

The library is mentioned in a number of instances in the Annual of the Mary Immaculate College, which ran from 1927 to 1962. The annual also contains a photograph of the Library in the 1927 issue. A few quotes from the College Annual are of interest:—

"We have such a supply of beautiful books from the College Library that we are tempted to spend the whole day reading" (p.45, 1927).
"There has been a change in the Library also. The centre of the room is now occupied by large Reading Tables which are convenient on Library Days . . . A visit to the College Library is educative in itself, as the shelves contain such a large number of books by standard authors, all of which are at our disposal on Library Days" (p.25 1928).

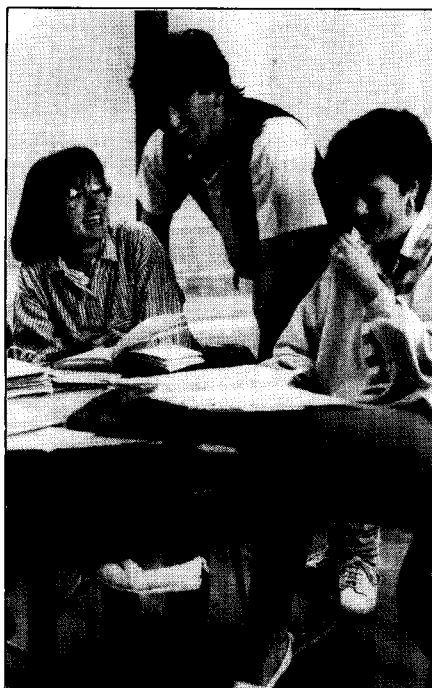
By 1963 the Department of Education was beginning to look at what was happening in the Primary School Classroom and coming to realise that a move away from teacher-centred to child-centred education was inevitable. This change would involve exploration, discovery, projects, etc., which necessitates a school library. It also required that teachers would, in future, be trained in these new methods. Hence adequate resources were required in the Colleges of Education Libraries.

The obvious, and least costly, source of supply to schools, from the Department of Education's viewpoint, was the Public Library Service, already circulating books in some schools as Public Library distribution centres. Mr. Sean O'Connor, Assistant Secretary to the Department of Education, when addressing the Annual Conference of the Library Association in Sligo in 1966 'on Libraries and Educational Planning' said 'The more we move out of the instruction box which we call the Classroom, whether through project or extended reading, the more will the resources of the library be necessary for a satisfactory formal education'; and if teachers are to be trained in the new methods in the primary schools "the obvious starting point then, must be the Training Colleges, and if these Colleges are to do their job adequately they must have properly equipped and efficiently run libraries".

In 1966, about five years previous to the introduction of the (New) Curriculum in the primary schools, a part-time Librarian/Lecturer was appointed by the College to organise the Library for student teachers. The Assembly Hall

was rearranged as a Library and by 1970 contained a stock of some 10,000 books. This included a Curriculum/Teaching Practice Library. The College was also changing from an all girls College to a co-educational institution.

The (New) Curriculum was introduced in 1971 and in 1972 a fulltime Librarian was appointed. Development plans for stocking, staffing, and building were submitted to the President and acted upon by the Department of Education. Between 1972 and 1982 the book fund was raised from £2,000 per annum to £85,000 per annum, staff from 2 to 8, total library stock increased from 12,000 to 100,000



A break from study.

books, and a new Library designed building was completed in 1980.

Perhaps the most significant factor in ensuring that the Library was adequately funded by the Department of Education was the introduction of the B.Ed. degree in 1974 when the College became a 'Recognised' College of the National University of Ireland.

Just over 10 years ago our first graduates were being conferred with their B.Ed. degrees by the National University of Ireland. Since the B.Ed. course requires that an academic subject be taken to Degree level, along with Education, a wide range of materials in the Humanities has been purchased. These include Philosophy, Irish, English, History, Geography, Music, French and Mathematics.

As Education is the core subject in the College curriculum all its aspects are represented in the Library stock e.g. Psychology, Sociology, History, Methodology, Art, Drama, etc. Also, materials (including A/V) are being assembled to meet the requirements of the trainee teachers in the primary schools. These include filmstrips, slides, charts, maps, transparencies, cassette tapes, video tapes, etc. Similarly Religion is given an important place in the Curriculum and all aspects are studied throughout the three year undergraduate course. The Library reflects this emphasis in its stock.

The purpose of the College Library is to serve the needs and objectives of the parent institution. This is being achieved by maintaining close liaison with the College administration and staff.

The Librarian is an exofficio member of the Academic Council and has access to An Fochoiste Stiurtha (Steering Committee) when the need arises. Contact with the Lecturing Staff is met on a day to day basis and an organised system of book selection for the Library is maintained. The attention of the lecturers to current publications is achieved by making available publishers' catalogues and review articles, etc. A wide range of reference and bibliographical tools is available in the Library for selection purposes. These include

MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE

the British Museum Catalogue from 1955 to date and the Library of Congress Catalogue (on fiche) as published. At the beginning of the financial year each Head of Department is notified of the Department's book fund and either the Head of the Department or a designated lecturer co-ordinates the Department's requisitions for the Library during the year.

The Library staff try to achieve overall co-ordination of stock purchases by interpreting the implicit needs and objectives of the College.

As stated elsewhere the College has now embarked on a series of Evening Courses, eight in all; these include Diploma Courses in Catechetics, Philosophy and Computer Studies. Further courses are planned for the coming academic year to include:— Irish Civilization, Introduction to Archaeology, Towards an Appreciation of the Arts, Programme in European Studies. This diversification programme has had exciting repercussions for the Library. On the positive side it has added a new dimension to Library activities, especially at night time, as

the College Library takes on a University style atmosphere. It has, however, meant that at times there is overcrowding in the Library and quite a hectic air of activity, especially at the issue desk.

The College is faced with a significant challenge because of its geographical location. The College Library is the only extensive source of undergraduate and research materials in the Humanities in the region. Consequently the Library staff are at all times conscious of the extended pressures on them to serve this need in the regional community. The Library has been a member of the Mid-West Region Library Committee for over ten years and a number of significant projects have been undertaken during this period. The computerisation of our periodicals holdings has been achieved through the cooperation of the Mid-West Region Library Committee and the National Board for Science and Technology and is updated regularly in the SHIRL listings through An Chomhairle Leabharlanna. A semi-formal system of co-operation for reading and study facilities is also

in operation in the Mid-West Region and Inter-Library Loans are exchanged without using Inter-Library Loan forms. The Mid-West Region Library Committee has also made strenuous efforts at having the resources of the region computerised, but with the rapid changes in technology which have taken place over the last decade this has not been achieved as yet.

Perhaps the most significant development in the past decade is the A/V Library. This has grown from a stock of 8,400 items in 1977 to the present stock of 27,000. Our holdings in microforms, some 7,000 items, are also housed in the A/V Library.

The A/V Library has three main functions as follows:—

(a) To serve as a workshop during teaching practice time. For this purpose the new Library is designed to combine the A/V Library, Children's Library, and Educational Technology unit as a workshop area, where teaching practice materials are made, borrowed, or copied.

(b) To provide audio and visual materials for undergraduate study, e.g.

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poetry cassettes, music records, language study tapes, etc.

(c) To provide microfilm and fiche for both undergraduate and research purposes, e.g. Newspapers, Irish Folklore collection, Reports of the Commissioners for National Education 1834–1920, etc.

The A/V Library has also the necessary equipment for using the above materials, e.g. cassette players, film-strip viewers, slide viewers, microfilms readers, microfiche readers, micro-reader printer, etc.

Library staff training has also been supported by the Department of Education's Training Scheme for Colleges of Education Library Staff. One member of staff has completed her Diploma in Library and Information Studies at U.C.D. We have also accom-

modated an AnCO trainee, with work experience, prior to entering the U.C.D. Library school. One member of the staff has also gone to the U.S.A. on a work exchange programme with an American library staff member, from Oregon Public Libraries.

The library stock at present would be adequate to cover postgraduate courses in the Humanities for example the following indexing and abstracting services are available:—

- (1) Abstracts of English Studies.
- (2) Australian Education Index.
- (3) Book Review Digest.
- (4) British Education Index.
- (5) British Humanities Index.
- (6) Current Index to Journals in Education.
- (7) Education Index.
- (8) Essay & General Literature Index.
- (9) Geo Abstracts.

- (10) Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature.
- (11) Sociology of Education Abstracts.
- (12) Sources for the History of Irish Civilisation Articles in Irish Periodicals.
- (13) Technical Education Abstracts.
- (14) Catholic Periodical & Literature Index, (The).
- (15) Philosopher's Index, (The).

The future role of the College Library could be seen as applying to six major areas:—

- (a) B.Ed. degree students.
- (b) Evening course students in the Humanities.
- (c) M.A. and M.Ed. students.
- (d) Inservice Education for teachers.
- (e) Research students in the Region.
- (f) Education personnel in the Region, e.g. inspectorate.



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION DUBLIN

Transfer to Degree Programmes for Certificate and Diploma Students

The Institute encourages applications for the 1988/89 undergraduate intake from current and prospective National Certificate or National Diploma holders who are interested in studying for a Bachelor's Degree in one of the disciplines encompassed by the Institute.

National Certificate or National Diploma holders who have obtained, or expect to obtain, at least a 'Credit' in their examinations are normally eligible for exemption from a part of the Institute's Degree Programme most closely related to their previous area of study.

Closing date for receipt of completed application forms: 1 July 1988.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION DUBLIN

Mature Students

The Institute welcomes applications for the 1988/89 undergraduate intake from candidates who are over 23 years of age on 1 January 1988. Selection is competitive and applicants will be required to provide evidence of their ability to pursue and profit from the course in which they are interested.

Closing date for receipt of completed application forms: 1 May 1988

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The Bachelor's Degree programmes at the Institute are:

Computer Applications	Accounting and Finance
Business Studies	Analytical Science
International Marketing and Languages	Applied Physics
Applied Mathematical Sciences	Biotechnology
Electronic Engineering	Communications
Applied Languages	

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Application forms and other information on these courses are available from: Student Admissions Office, National Institute for Higher Education, Glasnevin, Dublin 9.