

# Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.

Mary Immaculate College, Limerick was founded in 1898 by Dr. Edward O'Dwyer, Bishop of Limerick in collaboration with the Sisters of Mercy, for the education of Catholic primary school teachers. Dr. O'Dwyer became very famous subsequently, through his defence of the leaders of 1916.

A two year course was established for the education of primary teachers and the number of students attending the College was 100. This number remained static until 1952 when it was doubled.

The two year course remained until the College became a Recognised College of the National University of Ireland in 1974. Students entering the College in that year began a three year course leading to the B.Ed. In first year students take Education, Irish and two other subjects from the following: English, French, History, Geography, Philosophy, Music and Mathematics and in second year and third year they take Education and one of the other three subjects which they studied in first year.

Numbers expanded significantly and in the late seventies and early eighties over 800 full-time students were attending the College. Together with the B.Ed. there was a one year postgraduate course for graduates of all universities who wished to become primary teachers.

In November 1991 a further development in the history of the College took place with the announcement by the Minister for Education, establishing a link between the College and the University of Limerick. In the current academic year there are two degree programmes available to students entering the College, the B.Ed. and a new Liberal Art Degree (B.A.) 122 students have enrolled for the B.Ed. degree and 150



have enrolled for the B.A. It is hoped to offer postgraduate degrees in Education and in the Humanities in the near future.

Over the years the College has been very active in providing evening courses at University and College level. Many of these courses were taken by people who did not formerly have the opportunity to pursue further study. In this context the College reserved a number of places for mature students who were previously unable to avail of a third level education. The College also provides a number of leisure course activities, particularly in the Physical Education department, so that the place is generally a hive of activity during the day and until late at night.

The College is also conscious of the need for inservice for teachers. Courses in remedial teaching are held throughout the year and a summer school for teachers is held every July. Over 600 teachers attend these courses. Some of the courses are held at outcentres and others are school based.

In recent times the College has been very active in European affairs. It is a foundation institution in developing networks of Colleges throughout Europe and it co-ordinates one of the networks whose work has been adopted as a model for student exchange in Europe. For a number of years there has been a great interest in the College by Students from the U.S. who spend a term or a year in the College.

As the college approaches its centenary year in 1998, its future is exciting and it will play its customary role in being to the the forefront in educational development and innovation.

Thug an Coláiste tacaíocht i gcónaí don Ghaeilge agus don chultúr Gaelach. Déantar iarracht ar thimpeallacht Ghaelach a chothú sa Choláiste agus tá spiorad an mhaith i measc na mac léinn agus mar chruthú air sin rugadar ceithre chraobh na hÉireann leo ag an Slógadh Náisiúnta anuraidh