



## PRINCIPAL'S REPORT FOR 1952—1953

MR. PRESIDENT, MRS. CHERIAN, REV. CLERGY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I take pleasure in presenting to you a cursory account of the "incidentals" and the "essentials" that have contributed to the life of Stella Maris in 1952-53. We begin with the incidentals.

### **Incidentals**

Among the means of furthering a liberal education, John Henry Cardinal Newman, an authority on the subject, would recommend travelling as of primary importance since it brings the student into contact with various classes of people, their modes of thought, their interests and their forms of worship. To achieve this purpose, the student should go abroad. In our case the

process has been reversed and without travelling farther afield than their own city of Madras our students have benefited fully from visits of many important personages. from that of the Prime Minister, Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, in September. the delegates for the International Social Service Conference and the Catholic Students' Congress in December (more than 600 of whom called Stella Maris their temporary home), to the visit of the President of the Republic himself in February.

### **Essentials**

However beneficial these events may have been in "enlarging the mind," according to Cardinal Newman's favourite expression, we are at present more interested in

matters nearer home. The curriculum of Stella Maris College has been enriched by the addition of the long-desired Natural Science Group. Long-desired, and long-delayed also, on account of finances. Seventy-two lucky students found place in this group—others were painfully turned away.

### **Examinations**

March examination results were better, and worse, than in previous years, better for the B.A.'s who scored 95 per cent; worse for the Intermediate who scored 78 per cent. Let us wish them better luck next time. Congratulations are due to Miss Margaret Paul for a triple first class. To her the University awarded the Sir Henry Stone Medal for English Prose and Composition.

### **College Associations**

Our College Associations which have now reached the stage of productive maturity lost nothing of their fervour this year. Externally the bustle and excitement was perhaps a little less, but only because officers had now acquired skill to manage their affairs quietly and efficiently, and members expected the continuous round of interesting and instructive programmes.

Inaugurated by Sri S. K. Chettur, I.C.S., Secretary to Government, his address on "Art and Literature" not only inspired the Art and Literary Associations, but proved an equally effective stimulus to Scientists and Historians too. Monthly meetings took place regularly and the difficulty was not 'What shall we have?', but "When

can we have it?"—for every association was ready with its scheduled meeting, and often an extra one to be fitted in somehow. Careful manipulation of the calendar usually managed to satisfy even the most avaricious secretaries. There was a great variety of lectures delivered by eminent scholars and Honourable Ministers and other distinguished personages of India and other lands. There were debates which aroused burning student enthusiasm on such topics as: Happiness in the Modern World, The Practical Value of History and the Moral Value of the Film.

Associations also sent their Protégés outside the College walls to try their skill in the numerous Inter-Collegiate contests arranged throughout the year. Usually those stars returned to render a good account of themselves, bringing home a very creditable collection of cups, medals, prizes and certificates for musical and dramatic performances, essay competitions, recitation contests and the like.

But the spirit of the Associations was not merely competitive. There was the spirit of service too. Students gladly rallied to the call to contribute items for the many charitable causes which presented themselves: The Rayalaseema Famine Relief Fund, the St. Thomas' Mount Social Service Club and the First National Catholic Students' Congress.

In such a whirl of activity, February stole upon us unperceived to find the Associations assembled for the valedictory address delivered by

Sri J. L. Prabhu. His topic "Women can change India" met, as we may expect, with universal agreement and applause, but it was thought-provoking too, and students' minds began to ponder and plan upon possible ways and means. Let us hope their plans prove fruitful.

### **The Hostel**

Life in the Hostel, like the building itself, has been exceptionally full this year; so great was the demand for accommodation that space had to be sacrificed for "place," but perhaps the first shyness of the many first-year students was lost all the quicker as they learnt to help and entertain each other. As usual hostelites generously offered themselves for the various college activities, forming the backbone of the nursing detachment, the ticket-sellers' squads, Social Service groups and even fulfilling the less brilliant roles in the Circus—inside the elephant for instance. There have been many happy hours of recreation with sports, dancing, films, and entertainments; hostelites contributed an amusing item for the concert held at Loyola College in aid of the C. S. U. Congress. Even during the holidays those who remained behind, gallantly served as guides and hostesses. This exchange of ideas and experiences with the outside world has been a useful factor in the education of our hostelites for, as Rev. Fr. Leigh, S. J., pointed out in his address to them, college students should seek not only to cram down, like stuffed geese, the maximum amount of prescribed text-books, but rather to acquire education of the "whole man", physically, mentally

and morally. Perhaps some of the happiest memories for students of every creed will be those of the processions, by sun or candle-light and the quieter moments which have united them in prayer to the Father of all. May He continue to watch over all those who have shared the work and joys of the happy little family in the College Hostel.

### **St. John Ambulance Brigade**

In response to an appeal from the Minister of Health, Sri Amrit Kaur, for the formation of voluntary nursing divisions in Madras, a course of Home Nursing was started under the auspices of the St. John Ambulance (India) Brigade. Twenty students who qualified in the Theory and Practical examination were awarded certificates. Even more valuable than the certificate, however, is the experience gained in a subject which is essential for any kind of social work and useful for every girl in her own home. Six of the successful students helped to form the Guard of Honour to welcome the Chief Commissioner, Countess Mountbatten, on her visit to the social works of Madras and were privileged to be the only University students present at the reception.

### **Social Service League**

Thanks to the workers of the first hour whose surveys, census-taking, health supervision and teaching made the work of today relatively easy; we continue along the same lines, ever expanding toward better sanitation, employment and schooling. Fifty-four children of school-age are receiving primary education; some older girls are given

employment in their own homes or outside the cheri. A sanitation brigade of the men folk is carrying on a veritable reform, inside and outside.

In conclusion, just as surely as the college is going from strength to strength, just so surely is it progressing along academic lines and extra-curricular achievements. What

is even more heartening is the ever-increasing spirit of solidarity between students and staff. This unity of purpose forms the peculiar atmosphere that permeates Stella Maris. If we add to this, the benevolent attitude of the parents, we have an ideal set-up of which any college may well be proud. To each and all I here acknowledge my debt of gratitude.

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