

Chapter Sixteen

SPECIAL STUDIES (1926-1945)

Special studies in the New England Province from 1927 to the present have gone through many phases. Since this chapter is part of the formative years of the province, it limits itself to the period from 1926 to 1945. No one dividing date can be categorically set for the end of all formative years. 1945 appears to be such a date for special studies although earlier years such as 1939 and particularly 1942 would be the starting points of expansion for new school ventures. Dates on special studies can handily and uniformly be obtained for years beginning with 1941-2, since the March issue of the Jesuit Educational Quarterly under Fr. Edward B. Rooney and his assistants, contained this data on numbers of students, types of degrees and subject matter. Prior to that date, a detailed study of the province catalogue has been necessary. For this period (1926-1945), two phases are indicated. One ran from 1926 to 1935 when Fr. General's Instructio on education could become effective. Hence, the period from 1935 tends to be more productive than the earlier one. War, and its concomitant war-time needs, led to some diminution in the programs. But with the war over by 1945 and with a different provincial government, a new and much expanded program was possible and actualized.

Since the Instructio with its consequent bearing both on school curricula and personnel involved is of capital importance in the change from the first to the second phase, a few words on its origin and content are helpful. In 1930, Fr. General informed each American provincial (then six) that each province was to designate a man who would meet and deliberate under the immediate auspices of the General. The fields of examination would be the educational life of all our schools, their possibly greater coordination, and the careful preparation of teachers and administrators. Fr. Edward P. Tivnan was designated the representative of the New England Province. In October, 1932, he and his colleagues were summoned to Rome for deliberations. From these deliberations came the document, only 15 pages in length, known as the Instructio. Among its requirements was the establishment of a general prefect of studies in each province, and initially, the appointment of Fr. Daniel O'Connell as executive secretary with commissariate powers.

In addition to stimulating special studies, Fr. O'Connell had the task of introducing some more standard core requirements in the U.S. Jesuit Colleges, and to make provision for more degree sequences than the usual A.B. and B.S. degrees. Thus, there came about the gradual rise of such degrees as A.B. Greek (meaning the study of Greek as well as Latin); A.B. Latin (meaning the substitution of math-

ematics for Greek), as well as the arrangement that there would be honors as well as ordinary programs in both of these sequences, of which Latin would be a prescribed part. Another consequence of Fr. O'Connell's work was the plethora of B.S. degrees beyond majors in the physical and biological sciences. There was a B.S. in History, one in Social Science, one in Business Administration and one in Mathematics. Not all of Fr. O'Connell's proposed sequences and their contents were given unanimous approval, but with modifications, the chief lines did remain.

Prior to 1934, when the General's document was received, it had been the practice for the Socius to the Provincial to serve as the province prefect. This meant chiefly a sampling of classes when the annual provincial visitation was made in colleges and high schools. In the late autumn of 1934, Fr. William J. Murphy, then a professor of English in the Boston College Graduate School, was appointed the first full-time prefect. But with his appointment as Socius in May, 1937, he served in a dual capacity. With his appointment as rector at Boston College on August 15, 1939, Fr. Arthur J. Sheehan of the Weston Theological faculty was appointed prefect. Due to his Weston commitments, he could only give full-time to the work beginning in June, 1939.

A study can now be made of special students beginning in 1926. In that first year of the independent province, two priests destined for scholasticate work were in the second and final year of study abroad: Fr. John W. Moran was at the Gregorian, and Fr. Carol L. Bernhardt was at Cambridge in English Literature. Fr. Joseph J. Sullivan was in the second year of a three year doctorate in chemistry at John Hopkins, and Mr. Thomas D. Barry was studying mathematics for the first of two years at Georgetown with Fr. Fred Sohon. Thus there were, for a start, four in special studies, three as degree candidates. In the following year, only Fr. Sullivan and Mr. Barry were in this category. In 1928, when Fr. William J. McGarry, later Dean of philosophy and house dean at Weston, president of Boston College, and pioneer editor of Theological Studies, entered on a two-year program at the Biblical, he was the province's only special student. 1929 brought an addition of two priests -- Fr. Louis Sullivan and Fr. Robert A. Dyson to Roman studies, while Fr. McGarry continued. Mr. A.C. Carroll began a one year Master's program in chemistry at Holy Cross under Fr. George A. Strohaber. Arthur Whall, a priest who was later laicized, began literary studies at Cambridge University.

From 1930-1932, the numbers doubled from an earlier five to ten. Mr. Landrey in 1930, began a two-year degree sequence in chemistry at Holy Cross. Mr. Lloyd Smith studied privately at St. Joseph College in Philadelphia in biology. Frs. Sullivan and Dyson were joined in Rome by Frs. John J. Crowley and Robert A. Hewitt. To Fr. Whall's special studies in Europe were added private studies for Fr. William J. Murphy in literature, Fr. George Smith in history at Paris, and Fr.

Joseph P. Kelly, the province's perennial young man, in philosophy at Paris. Seven of these ten were in degree sequences.

In 1931-32, in addition to seven continuing students, there were added Fr. Forrest Donahue at Rome; Fr. George A. O'Donnell in geophysics at St. Louis, working toward a Ph.D. degree; Mr. Hugh H. Blake in private study of history with Fr. Robert A. Swickerath; and Mr. Albert McGuinn working towards a doctoral degree in chemistry at Fordham. In 1932, in Fr. Kilroy's last status, two more joined the biennium in Rome: Fr. Joseph McManus and Fr. John A. O'Brien. Fr. Stephen A. Mulcahy was a private student in classics at Oxford. Two more began work in science -- Mr. W.L. Keleher in a one-year degree course in chemistry at Holy Cross and Fr. Thomas H. Quigley in an extended doctoral program in physics at John Hopkins. That year Fr. Walter W. McGuinn began the pioneering in Social Work at Fordham and prepared for the establishment and first deanship of the Boston College School of Social Work in 1936. The total number of students had reached ten, up from four in 1926.

The year 1933-34, showed essentially the same picture. There were three new candidates in Rome (John J. Collins, Henry A. Martin, James J. Mohan). Then there arose the problem of whether, under new papal legislation, those previously in a biennium could now finish in one year as was true of both Fr. Martin and Fr. Mohan. Fr. General did not seem pleased and the two years were clearly re-instituted or declared already required. Fr. William A. Carey was a special student at Oxford; Fr. Thomas D. Barry, now a priest, returned to private studies at Georgetown and seemed destined for astronomy. One notable difference from past assignments was that of Fr. William E. FitzGerald, who after four years of theology at Lyons, matriculated for a degree in the classics at the Sorbonne. One might note that it was to the old world of Europe that the province turned for most advanced training. Harvard, Yale and Chicago were still in a future world. The transitional year (1934-35) between the promulgation of the Instructio and its enfleshment saw a continuation of five students. In addition, Fr. Coleran joined Fr. Collins at the Biblical. In science, Fr. Tom Barry transferred from Georgetown to M.I.T. in astronomy. Mr. Gerald Hennessey began 2 years of biology study in Fordham, founding himself for years of service in 5th and 6th form work at St. George's in Kingston, Jamaica. Fr. Anthony (Tony) MacCormack was a special student in biology at Holy Cross. With the arrival of the Baghdad mission, two regents (William J. Casey and Joseph P. Connell) studied Arabic in Beirut. Fr. Patrick F. Higgins was granted a one-year leave of absence from Holy Cross to fill the residence requirements for his history doctorate, after which he worked part time in summer sessions.

Thus it can be said that prior to the implementation of the Instructio on special students, these studies were Roman studies essential for Weston; private studies; master's and a few doctorate's in science, and little more. The notable exceptions were the extended

classics course at the Sorbonne, and Fr. Walter McGuinn's social work degree. It might be noted that man power was not in short supply during these years. The total number of special students from 1926 to 1934-35 increased from 4 to 11, and of this 11, 8 were in degree programs. The total number, however, in the province, had increased from 492 in 1926-27 to 758 in 1934-35, and this latter number was an increase of 33 over the preceeding year. The number of staff members of the three schools had increased between 1926 and 1934. Holy Cross had gone from 36 to 65, and Boston College from 34 to 67; Boston College High School and the Immaculate had a modest growth from 33 to 39. College philosophy classes had decreased notably in size. At Boston College, two teachers after 1931 taught senior ethics, and two (not one), taught natural theology and psychology. At Holy Cross each of these subjects had three teachers. After 1931, there were also regent repetitors in these fields.

Junior philosophy teachers at Holy Cross (to cite one instance), had increased from three to five. At Boston College, special teachers taught only in the graduate school rather than at upper-division levels and graduate work, thus necessitating more teachers needlessly. Beginning in 1927, the college deanship was divided by the creation of a freshman dean, and in 1932, by a sophomore dean. History classes were cut from their 1928-29 high, but possible, numbers of 300 in one group to 30 to 40 in sections. This arrangement required the gradual hiring of more lay professors and employing Jesuits who might have had one year at a minimum of special studies. So great was the surplus of regents that in 1930, the regency was cut by stages (as previously seen) from three to two years, and to less in special cases. Thus, it is concluded, that from a manpower point of view, much more in relation to special studies for the schools could have been done from 1926 through 1934-35. The Instructio was a blessing for New England Province schools.

The year 1935-36 was comparatively a banner, path-breaking year. Five scholastics, nearly half the total of students in the preceeding and best year, were assigned to master's programs at St. Louis University. The following year, eight others replaced them. In 1937, five scholastics and two priests began master's programs there. Then the numbers were reduced to one a year from 1939 to 1941, but for a good reason. In addition to the contingent of five at St. Louis in 1935-36, several other scholastics were assigned elsewhere. These included two for chemistry at Worcester, one in economics at Boston College, two in Arabic at Beirut, two in archeology at the University of Chicago, one in the private study of biology at Philadelphia, and two at Catholic University -- one in economics and one in a doctoral program in anthropology. There was a total of 15 scholastics. As for priest students, Fr. Collins and Coleran continued at the Biblical and two more were assigned to Rome including Fr. Edward L. Murphy for the newer discipline of missiology. At United States universities, Fr. T. Laurence Foran began classical studies at John Hopkins, Fr. William L. Johnson in English at Yale and Fr. Tom Smith

was in private study of physics at Georgetown. Totals came to 23, more than doubling the previous high of 11. Of these 23, 18 were newly assigned.

In some of these early assignments, as was also later true, not all were able to finish successfully. The general method of training in the Society, with its many excellencies, was not always versatile enough to meet a differing type of requirement set by graduate schools. They insisted on term papers, essentially unknown in Society training prior to the mid 1930's. Wide and prompt readings of collateral matter were rated higher for class and examinations beyond the repetition of class lectures. As one Jesuit wag put it, Jesuits could analyze legs off chairs, but their synthetic powers for thesis and dissertation were much less cultivated. The gradual introduction of seminars, the writing of term papers, and the casting of dissertations in technical form and according to accepted style sheets, greatly improved the academic outcomes for industrious students. Later generations may find it difficult to understand what capable and hard-working men experienced in defeat or only partial success, yet many of these pioneers did spoil the Egyptians as Cardinal O'Connell trusted they would. There may perhaps have been a few where the Egyptians spoiled the Jesuits who became too enamored of university prestige and of specious false ideals.

In an earlier chapter on tertianship, details were given on the priests who began special studies in 1936, and a few paragraphs that back the numbers of scholastics at St. Louis were given. Without detailing all the numbers, names and subjects from 1935-1944 when the emergencies of war contracted many problems, certain lines of development can be seen. Social sciences were more in evidence due to the circumstances of depression and the influence of the 28th Congregation of 1938. In economics, there were studies by Fr. Ernest B. Foley, Mr. William Seavey Joyce and Raymond Cahill. Sociology was studied by Fr. Paul Facey, Fr. David Twomey, Fr. Hubert Callaghan and Fr. John C. O'Connell. Fr. O'Connell studied at Harvard while still teaching a full schedule of ethics classes at Boston College, from 1935-38. Fordham began to draw students -- Fr. Edward H. Finnegan in history; Fr. William F. Finneran and Fr. John Hinchey in philosophy; Fr. Facey in sociology; Mr. Charles F. Donovan and Mr. Daniel N. Dwyer in English; Mr. R.J. McEwen in economics; and Mr. John Flavin in biology.

The sudden drop in special students at St. Louis from 1939-1941 was not a turning aside from special studies. It was a change in locale that effected the drop in members at St. Louis. In 1939, in the house destined as the later rectory of the new St. Ignatius, a study house was established. There a group of ten students for a period of three years studied at Boston College for a masters degree under Fr. William E. FitzGerald as superior. In the first year there were the following students: Robert I. Burke, history; William A. Carroll, Latin; William J. Van Etten Casey, English; John F. Caulfield

in Mathematics; Paul A. Curtin, English; Merrill Greene in Physics; Thomas M. Lannon, Latin; Joseph M. Manning, Latin; John P. Murray, Mathematics; Thomas W. O'Connor in Latin. That following year (1940-1941), the students were: Stanley Bezuszka, Physics; Francis J. Donoghue, History; George R. Fuir, Latin; Thomas J. Grace, English; Richard V. Lawlor, English; Thomas B. Mulvehill, History; John V. O'Connor, Latin; and John P. Murray, Mathematics. Two priests, students at Harvard, were also in residence.

In the final year of the St. Ignatius House of Studies were: Stanley Bezuszka, Physics; Francis C. Buck, Chemistry; Francis X. Carty, Latin; John P. Donnelly, English; Daniel I. Foley, Greek; William J. Read, English; John P. Rock, Latin; Francis A. Small, History; John J. Walsh, Greek; and Maurice B. Walsh, Latin. With the coming of World War II, when regents were in demand for war-time courses or as replacements for chaplains, and with the appointment of Fr. Fitzgerald to Portland, the study house was closed.

One totally new form of special studies began in 1939 and continued to 1943. This was the biennium in sacred eloquence at Weston under the supervision of Fr. Raymond J. McInnis to 1941 when he became tertian instructor, and under Fr. Edward L. Murphy from 1941 to 1943 when it was discontinued. The program, while chiefly for New Englanders, also had Jesuits from other provinces. Among the New Englanders who concluded a two year program were: Frs. Paul F. Barry, Joseph F. MacFarlane, Leo A. Reilly, Paul J. Murphy, John St. John, John P. Evanson, Francis X. Gleason, John H. Kelly, and Charles J. Reardon. In the course for a year were: Frs. William F. Dwyer, James B. Healy, and one who had finished but one year when the program was discontinued -- Fred Bailey. A sequence in theology was conducted by the theology staff from 1941-1944, when access to a Roman University was precluded by war-time, and when Catholic University theology studies were not encouraged. Among the New England Province in the program were: Frs. Fred Harkins, Edmund Hogan, Daniel Saunders, Francis X. Lawlor, Edward H. Nowlan. There were also men from other provinces. In 1942-43, a group of Iraq missionaries, Frs. William J. Casey, Joseph P. Connell, Thomas McDermott and James P. Shea studied Arabic at Columbia.

Even before the end of this era of special studies had ended, and as priests who had obtained a master's degree earlier were ready for continued studies, a problem or dilemma arose and was the subject matter of provincial consultants concern. Should a man, who had acquired a master's degree particularly in the classics or English, be constrained to follow these subjects further, or be free for assignments especially for philosophy, theology and school management? Frequently, these men were the very ones naturally suited in talent and temperament for these studies, different from their original major. And while the scholasticates always had continuing need for teachers in philosophy and theology and their allied subjects, the colleges also had need for trained theology teachers, and especially philoso-

phy teachers, since this subject was much more the required staple at that time in all manners of undergraduate schools. Experience also showed that the initial year of a serious master's program broadened one's horizons and cultivated wider and critical reading. This method of first training future philosophers and theologians in advanced work in classics, history and literature, appeared to be the way in which distinguished European Jesuit scholars were cultivated. It may be said that this initial year of study in another field at the master's level enriched, rather than handicapped the future teachers of philosophy, theology and of educational philosophy and administration.

Here a pause might be made to notice that up until this time, outside of those few in a philosophy biennium in Rome, and two men in philosophy at Fordham, next to nothing was done to prepare philosophy teachers through special studies for the two existing colleges, and the one to be established within a very few years. As a result, lay associates with doctorates in philosophy began to be more and more numerous and influential in philosophy departments. Even as late as 1953, college deans discouraged a province director from encouraging advanced philosophy training, and, at the most, would recommend a one-year master's program -- then hard to find in a recognized philosophy department. In this regard the New England Province was well behind the New York Province which encouraged such studies for its colleges. Failure to act here was the chief blind spot of most officials, including the director of special studies from 1957-1968.

With these considerations of the two periods from 1926 to 1945, the formative years for the province program for special studies had ended. The fact that the once burdensome mortgage on Weston had been paid off, made funds available for other purposes. The province was in a better position in money and men to inaugurate numerous and varied doctoral degrees for the two expanding colleges, and the college soon to be established at Fairfield. It might be said on the analogy of the United States Constitutional development, that the era of Chief Justice John Jay, and of Chief Justice Oliver Ellsworth, was yielding a place to the judicial craftsmanship of Chief Justice John Marshall. This is how many see John McEleney, and his abiding contribution to special studies as his part in the years of province expansion.