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Contributions of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan to the Education in New Mexico

Sister Maura McDonald O.P.

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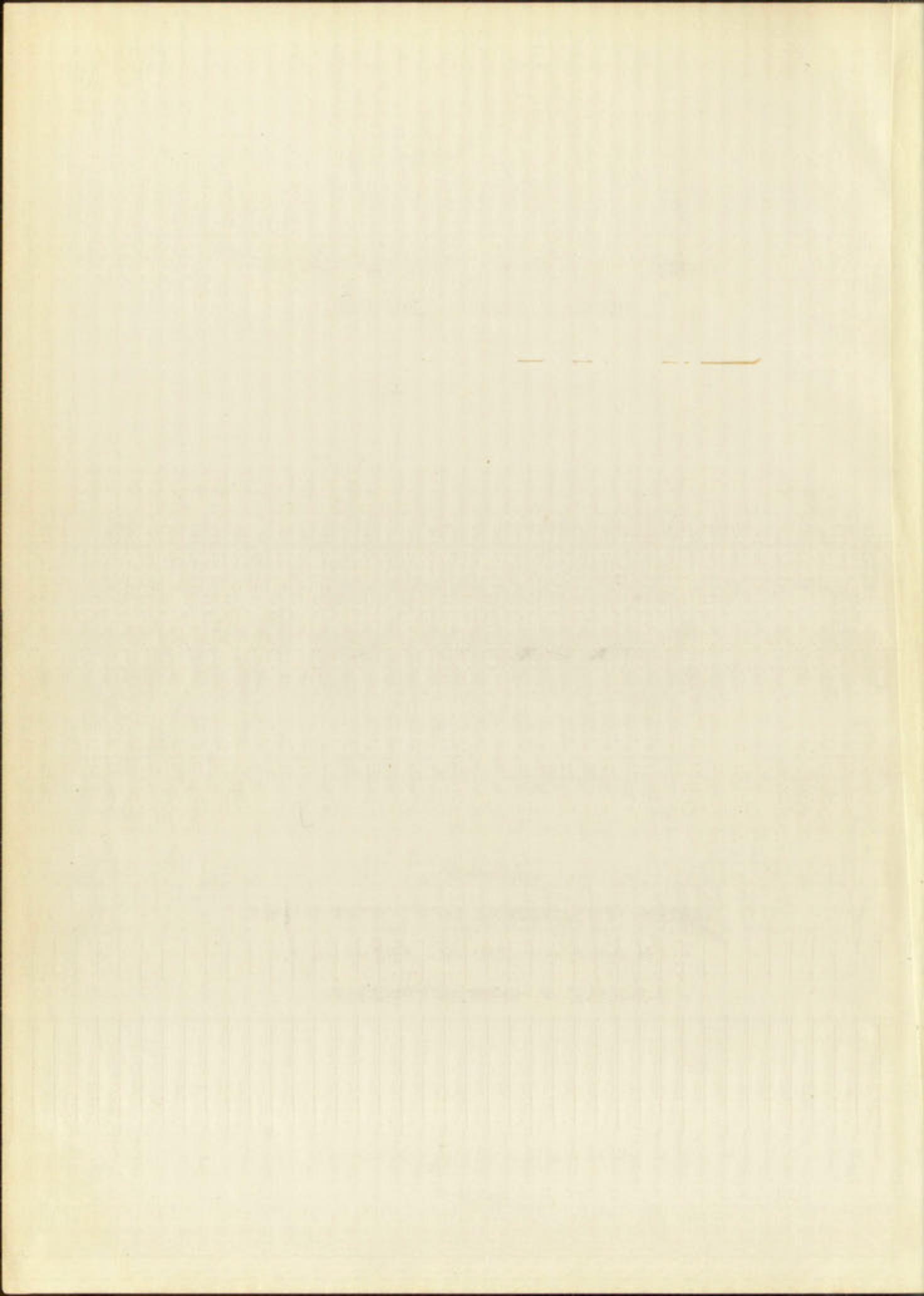
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CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DOMINICAN SISTERS
OF GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN,
TO
EDUCATION IN NEW MEXICO

By
Sister Maura McDonald, O.P.,

A Thesis
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Education

University of New Mexico

1942

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This thesis, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the Graduate Committee of the University of New Mexico in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

J. R. Hammond
DEAN

May 6, 1942
DATE

Thesis committee

E. H. Fisher
CHAIRMAN

Selma E. Herr

R. A. Moyer

Let me, therefore, direct you to the attached copy
which has been received by the Director of the
Department of New Mexico in regard to the
subject of the above.

ALICE D. ABLE

Very truly,
Yours,
Alice D. Able

1914

✓

Theresa Condit



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Direction of growth on various media

Growth of *Penicillium* on various media

Growth of *Penicillium*
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND SOURCES OF MATERIAL

Until comparatively recent years the Catholic Church in this country was distinguished by its labors rather than its fruits--by its seed rather than its harvest. Mature and experienced now, however, after so many years, it can afford to reminisce occasionally on the victories achieved and to envision still larger good; it can also pause to evaluate the traditions it has established, encourage the retention of the more desirable, and supply the impetus for historical studies which lead to a preservation of these same traditions.

When, in 1925, the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan, consented to take charge of a small parochial school in Dixon, New Mexico, they were but following the footsteps of the pioneering fathers of the past, breaking trails for progress, and laying the foundation for extensive educational work in the state. In the tradition of his predecessors, too, the Most Reverend Albert T. Daeger, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Santa Fe, who, through his representative, Reverend Peter Kuppers, invited the Sisters to New Mexico, was but following the example of the revered and illustrious Bishop Lamy, the first to secure religious

THE
JOURNAL OF THE
ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

Vol. 100, Part 1, 1970
In this country we are fortunate to have a journal of the first-class quality, and especially now, when the need for such a journal is more than ever, it is a pleasure to receive it. The journal is a valuable source of information on the progress of research in the various branches of anthropology, and it is a pleasure to see the results of the work of the leading authorities in the field. The journal is a valuable source of information on the progress of research in the various branches of anthropology, and it is a pleasure to see the results of the work of the leading authorities in the field.

When, in 1970, the journal was founded, it was a small, but it has since grown into a large and important journal. It is a pleasure to see the results of the work of the leading authorities in the field. The journal is a valuable source of information on the progress of research in the various branches of anthropology, and it is a pleasure to see the results of the work of the leading authorities in the field. The journal is a valuable source of information on the progress of research in the various branches of anthropology, and it is a pleasure to see the results of the work of the leading authorities in the field.

teachers to take charge of schools in this state.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It is the purpose of this study to present the data now available appertaining to the work of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan, in New Mexico and to evaluate their work in the light of improvements in the educational, economic, cultural, and social conditions of these various communities.

Delimitation. Necessarily the scope of this study will be limited to the period of seventeen years, 1925 to 1942, during which the Dominican Sisters have taught schools in New Mexico.

Importance of the study. An adequate history of progress in any field should include a critical analysis of all agencies and factors which have contributed to its advancement. It is a well-known fact that education in New Mexico had its inception in the institutions founded by the Padres who marched in with the Conquistadores. The Franciscans were credited with having established schools wherein the natives were taught to "live courteously". Loretto Sisters, Christian Brothers, Jesuits, Sisters of Charity, and many others followed in their wake to carry on the

traditions of those first Christian teachers. Although it is but seventeen years since the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan, joined the ranks of religious educators in the state, these years have been replete with worthwhile accomplishments. The data assembled in this thesis will serve to complement the studies made by members of other religious Communities who likewise have served the youth of New Mexico.

II. SOURCES OF THE DATA

In assembling the data for this work, access was had to every available source of information. A questionnaire was submitted to sixteen members of the Community who were first appointed to teach in New Mexico schools. Chronicles and Annals preserved in the Community archives in Grand Rapids, Michigan, were examined carefully. Some information was secured from Mother Eveline, the former Prioress General, who was responsible for the initial placing of Dominican Sisters in all but two of such schools in the state. School records also were found to be extremely valuable in checking statistical data for this study.

III. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The method of procedure in this study will be

largely historical, with only incidental use of the questionnaire, interview, and local school records. An analysis of each type of data will be used as a countercheck against the other in order to arrive at a true estimate of the work performed by the Grand Rapids Dominican Sisters in the rural communities of New Mexico.

IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE THESIS

In this study, Chapter II will deal with the history of the Dominican Order, its European background, and its activities in the United States, with particular reference to those of the Grand Rapids Community. Particulars regarding the establishment of schools in New Mexico will be treated in Chapter III. Teachers assigned to the work, their qualifications, and the conditions under which they labored in the new field will be sketched. Chapter IV will present a resumé of what has been accomplished in the schools under charge of the Sisters. Possibilities for extension of the New Mexico educational program of the Dominican Sisters will be considered in Chapter V.

V. SURVEY OF RELATED STUDIES

With the exception of a short survey in his thesis entitled The History of Catholic Education in New Mexico Since the American Occupation, which Louis Avant submitted

as a dissertation for a Master of Arts Degree at the University of New Mexico in 1940, no study of the work of the Dominican Sisters in New Mexico has been made.

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city of New York in 1890, as well as a copy of the
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CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE DOMINICAN SISTERS OF GRAND RAPIDS

"The seed will fructify if sown; it will but moulder if hoarded." Such was the terse dictum of Dominic Guzman which silenced critics who doubted the wisdom of dispersing untried members of his new Order when he sent them two by two throughout Europe to preach against the heretics in 1216. More than seven hundred years later the Superior General of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan, studied the words of St. Dominic when she questioned the advisability of expanding her own Community to include schools in the Southwest. Mother M. Benedicta O'Rourke, imbued with the spirit of her Order, did not hesitate long in deciding that the opening of schools in New Mexico lay well within the mandate of the wise founder.

Dominic Guzman, scion of a noble house of Spain, and dedicated to the work of preaching among the victims of the Albigensian heresy, found his key to success in the foundation of a new Order whose sole purpose should be preaching and teaching. His new escutcheon, struck in 1216, blazoned forth the mission of all Dominicans for all time: "Laudare, Benedicere, Praedicare." In his day the latter word was

synonymous with "docere"; consequently he set about preparing young men for the teaching apostolate.

So great was his charm that St. Dominic drew into his Order many of the greatest minds from among students and professors of the renowned universities of Europe. Among the most illustrious applicants was Thomas of Aquin, known in the Church as St. Thomas Aquinas. To his incomparable Summa Theologica students still go for answers to the most abstruse philosophical questions.

While Dominic was preaching in France a number of young girls appealed to him for protection against the insidious influence of the heretics. It was then that he conceived the idea of establishing a convent for cloistered Nuns whose primary object would be the salvation of their own souls, and through their contemplative prayer and sacrifice might help in the salvation of other souls, and whose secondary purpose should be the education of young girls exposed to the errors of the Albigensian heresy. Our Lady of Prouille Convent, Prouille, France, then, became the prototype for all future foundations of Dominican Sisters. From this we see that St. Dominic determined upon sanctity of life and scholarship for the Order of men called the First Order, and that of women called the Second Order. "Contemplare aliis tradere," to give to others the fruits of contemplation, is to this day the motto of every Dominican

scholar.

Germany was among the first objectives of the preaching friars, as the men of the Order are called. Shortly after the death of St. Dominic, a number of white-robed preachers arrived in Ratisbon, Bavaria. Bishop Sigfried of the See of Ratisbon had witnessed the marvels that attended the work of the new Order. His friendship with the Dominicans probably led him to propose the erection of a convent of Nuns in his episcopal city. He appealed to Count Henry of Ortenburg, who responded by giving generously of his means. In consequence the Convent of Holy Cross was completed and the Sisters installed in 1237.

None of the vicissitudes of time--wars, pestilence, not even the Reformation, could disturb the even tenor of life in the Dominican Convent. It weathered every storm until 1803, when the safety of the inmates became tenuous indeed during the stormy days of the Napoleonic invasions. Ratisbon was then the only Dominican convent in Germany that could trace its history and traditions almost to the beginning of the Order. Evil days seemed about to overtake the Sisters, however, when all religious property was granted to Prince Dalberg as indemnity. Sadly the Sisters awaited secularization orders, grieving at the prospect of leaving their beloved convent. Where there had been over three

scholar.

Germany was among the first to object to the...
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hundred convents in Bavaria, now but two, Holy Cross and another, were functioning, the others being confiscated to satisfy the greed of the invaders. After some time Prince Dalberg sent his representative with instructions to make counter-propositions. Either the Sisters must give up the convent or they must take charge of the schools of the city.

Leave Holy Cross the Sisters would not, so long as there remained a hope of carrying on the work according to the intent of its founder. As their Rule forbade them to go abroad, they solved the difficulty by setting aside a portion of their convent for school rooms. Soon it became evident that the space reserved was inadequate to care for the many pupils whom eager parents entrusted to the Nuns. As early as 1817 a schoolhouse was erected and the necessary provisions made for preparing teachers to undertake the task of educating the children. Under these skillful women the school made such progress that more and more teachers were prepared to secure state teaching certificates. So well entrenched was Holy Cross in the educational roots of Ratisbon that as late as 1939 the convent had not been disturbed nor had the school connected with it suffered greatly.

The same onerous conditions which changed the status of the Dominican Nuns of Ratisbon created dissatisfaction among all classes of German citizens. Thus we find many

hundred countries in America, not but two, Italy, Greece and
another, were functioning, the others being considered as
active the great of the movement. After some time France
Italy sent his representative with instructions to make
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As early as 1911 a schoolhouse was erected and the movement
provision made for providing students to undertake the work
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The work was carried out in the school house.
of the building work of building created dissatisfaction
among all classes of Italian citizens. There is still more

fine German families coming to America, contributing, for a time, the bulk of the influx of foreigners into the United States during the latter part of the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth centuries. One author quotes an early reporter thus:

Since the period when the Gothic tribes, under their hereditary kings, strode down the banks of the Borysthenes and overwhelmed Greece and Germany and the whole empire of the Romans, no immigration of men has occurred in the world at all similar to that which is pouring itself upon the shores of the United States. In extent, none, anterior to the Gothic or since has equaled it.¹

Of the German immigrants of the latter half of the eighteenth century, most of them settled in Pennsylvania. About half of them were Catholics who preferred the Quaker Colony for the simple reason that bigoted laws enforced in most of the other colonies were not imitated in Penn's Commonwealth. Later many of them settled on Long Island and in New York City. Through the Ludwig Mission Verein much needed help was secured for the erection and maintenance of religious institutions among the German population in this country.

The tide of immigration during the nineteenth century, however, swept more and more of the German element into New York and to Long Island. So many of them congregated in New

¹Eugene J. Crawford, The Daughters of Dominic on Long Island (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1938), p. 17.

time German families visited...
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York City and Brooklyn that the German language was used exclusively for many years. These hardy, reliable folk soon adapted themselves to American customs and manners and in the long run contributed much that was valuable to the amalgam. As Catholic parochial schools were badly needed, community leaders set about to remedy an undesirable situation. If they could not secure competent teachers in America they would send to the mother country.

In 1851 Abbot Boniface Wimmer, O.S.B., requested the prioress of Holy Cross Convent, Ratisbon, to furnish Sisters for the school which he proposed to build among his German people in Pennsylvania. After two years of deliberation and planning, the superiors were ready to call for volunteers for the new mission field. Christine Sevier indicates the enthusiasm with which the Sisters responded.

In the holy rivalry for enlistment in the vanguard under orders for distant shores that now ensued, all claimed precedence. The superiors, however, determined to limit the pioneer band, reluctantly submitting to the dictates of expediency rather than the impulses of their own ardent nature. The volunteers finally selected were Sisters Josepha Wiltzhofer, Augustina Neuhierl, Francesca Retter, and Jacobina Riederer, the latter two lay Sisters. Besides anticipating every personal need, the Community supplied the two missionaries with 4,000 marks, their passage being defrayed by the Ludwig Mission Verein. The plans for the expedition were completed when Abbot Wimmer, O.S.B., agreed to meet them at the New York pier, promising to accompany them to Carrollton, Maryland,

Where they were to make their foundation.²

The four Sisters, wearing secular garb for convenience in traveling, arrived in New York on August 26, 1853. Through an unexplained misunderstanding the person delegated to meet the Sisters did not appear.

The chance passerby did not know, nor did the busy city surmise that the quartette of frightened women were bringing to America the holy traditions of the Dominican Order from a source that went back to 1233, and which through all the vicissitudes of the centuries had continued to exist as an unbroken chain connecting modern Dominican life with the first traditions of Dominic and his immediate followers.³

Providence took a hand in the affairs of the stranded Sisters. Directed by a note of introduction which they had been given, they applied to the Redemptorists in New York. They considered it only a temporary expediency until communications could be established with the Abbot Wimmer. The newcomers were not destined to reach Pennsylvania, however, for a series of changed plans left them in Williamsburg, New York.

On September 2, 1853, they were installed in their own quarters on property on which later was built another Holy Cross Convent. They donned their religious habit which

² Christine Sevier, From Ratisbon Cloisters (Amityville, New York: Novitiate Press, 1914), p. 22.

³ Crawford, op. cit., p. 28.

thousands of their American successors have worn with credit and distinction. At Williamsburg a parish school had been established ten years earlier and placed under the direction of secular teachers. As had happened before, and has happened many times since, the enrollment increased by leaps and bounds when parents discovered the presence of Nuns in their school. Two Sisters divided between them the hundred forty pupils scattered throughout the grades. It will be remembered that these teaching Sisters were no bungling tyros but were well trained in pedagogical method. Highly efficient teaching was traditional with Dominicans, and these two did not fail, even under the most severe hardships, to maintain that high standard.

To supplement the labors of their Sisters in America, the Motherhouse sent two other Sisters to New York in 1855. Care of the more than four hundred children that crowded every available place necessitated a call for more helpers. In 1857, two more were sent with reluctance, for the Ratisbon Community needed teachers for their own school. These two proved to be the last contribution of Ratisbon to missionary endeavors in America. Soon afterwards the new Community was to make arrangements to become independent of the parent organization. Though the number of Sisters working in New York was small, the quality of character was

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unsurpassed. Right valiantly had the little band triumphed over the exigencies of time and circumstance and created for themselves an exalted place in the hearts of children and parents.

Early did benefactors rally to the cause espoused by the hard-working Sisters. Among the generous souls attracted by the work at Williamsburg was one Father Ambrose Buchmeier, whose parish was in New York City. Second Street, on which his church was located, was but a few miles from Holy Cross Convent. Father Buchmeier envisioned great accomplishments for his parish school if he could but secure the services of the Dominican Sisters. Mother Josepha could not turn a deaf ear to the earnest pleadings of the good priest and, despite their own urgent need for more teachers, she sent three Sisters to take charge of the new school for girls.

It became increasingly evident that expansion was out of the question unless more help could be enlisted. As it was the rule of cloistered Nuns, that candidates could be received only by autonomous convents, there seemed to be but one mode of procedure, and that the way of independence. The American foundation set in motion the machinery which would bring about such a status. Williamsburg, even under such conditions, did not receive enough candidates to take care of the many calls for Sisters. It became imperative to

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establish an independent status for the Second Street Community and in 1869 the two were officially separated but not estranged. Both Communities prospered, establishing schools as quickly as possible at the request of many pastors.

Mother Augustine, the superior who had first been sent to take charge of the Second Street convent, was now accounted its highest superior. She had been trained under Mother M. Josepha, a truly noble woman who bequeathed to her spiritual daughter her admirable qualities of perseverance and leadership. Mother M. Josepha was succeeded by a woman in every respect her counterpart, Mother M. Seraphine.

Shortly after she assumed office, Mother Seraphine received into the Order, Appolonia Fiegler, a girl of fifteen who was destined for great accomplishments. Appolonia, the only daughter of Aloys Fiegler and Joanna Iffland, was born in Worbis, Eichsfeld, Germany, August 16, 1848. The mother's ambition for her children was a good education, both secular and religious. When Appolonia was old enough to make the long trip to the school taught by the Sisters, the child was delighted. Even while she was attending the People's School, Appolonia was accounted a remarkable scholar and was pointed out by her teachers as having unusual talent for leadership. Years later, when the little girl became Mother Aquinata, chroniclers said of her: "When the history of Michigan is

written, Mother Aquinata's name should stand in letters of gold." She, it was, who became the foundress of the Order in Michigan.

One virtue stands out in the early life of the future foundress,--no matter at what cost of personal sacrifice, the poor were given what she could spare from the meager supplies of her own family. In an effort to improve their economic condition, Mr. Fiegler and his son emigrated to America. While they were struggling to get established, the little mother back in Germany went out to work and left Appolonia to take care of the home. Already her genius for organization manifested itself in the perfect order that prevailed in the house of the aunt with whom they made their home. Two small cousins were taken each evening for instruction in the catechism and reading.

Appolonia was about thirteen when the father was able to send for his little family. It was less than two years later that the girl announced to her parents that she was resolved to consecrate herself to God in religion. Her father seriously opposed the step, for he recognized those qualities of mind and heart which would have made her eminently successful in the world of business. His consent was given hesitantly.

The young girl asked admittance of the Dominican

Sisters of Holy Cross Convent still affiliated with Ratisbon. February 15, 1864, Appolonia Fiegler entered upon her training period in the Dominican Novitiate, and on August 4, 1864, received the habit of the Order of St. Dominic. She was given the name of Sister M. Aquinata in honor of the Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas Aquinas.

With the expansion of the work of the Dominican Sisters in New York, as was mentioned before, the Second Street convent was opened and called Holy Rosary Convent. To that convent, before the severance from the original American foundation, Sister M. Aquinata was assigned as teacher. From Mother Augustine the little novice learned to know and appreciate the glories of the Dominican traditions. Her superior, though of the nobility, deemed it not beneath her to perform the lowliest tasks for her beloved poor. During the periods of stress and strife in New York, it was not unusual to see long lines of women and children begging bread from the great-hearted superior of Holy Rosary Convent.

With ability and talent for leadership such as was displayed by the young Sister, she gave promise of becoming a great asset to the struggling Community. The best teachers were secured from New York to tutor her in the branches of higher learning as well as music and art. She was admirably well-fitted and adequately prepared for the difficult mission

that lay ahead of her.

In 1877 the noble Mother Augustine lay dying. She called her Sisters to her bedside and with prophetic insight said to them: "Somewhere in the West a peninsula will be dotted white with Dominican foundations." No one had ever dreamed of missions outside of New York City, for it was even then impossible to fill the needs in that fast developing metropolis. In the election that followed upon the death of the superior, many deemed it advisable to nominate Sister Aquinata. Such a choice was not to be; her mission was to be the instrument for the fulfillment of the dying superior's prophecy. But this occurred later,--her first call was to Jersey City.

Executive ability of a rare nature was exhibited by Sister Aquinata when she was sent to open a new house in Jersey City. Despite serious handicaps she succeeded in erecting a beautiful convent and boarding school for girls. The work on the building was scarcely begun ere the call to new fields of endeavor reached the Motherhouse. Almost breathtaking in its suddenness, the prophecy of Mother Augustine was about to be fulfilled. Only a few months after her death came the call to her Community to go far afield and spread the gospel of truth in a new territory. Inspired by the example of her late superior, Mother Hyacinth,

now the superior of the New York Motherhouse, eagerly grasped the opportunity to share in the apostolate. Strangely enough, it was Michigan, a peninsula, from which the call came.

Even in the middle of the nineteenth century Michigan could scarcely be called anything but a wilderness. Indians inhabited the northern and southern peninsulas, with but a few white settlers scattered about. Into this veritable outpost of civilization the Bishop of Marquette, the Most Reverend Frederic Baraga, was assigned to a diocese. His warm-hearted sympathies quickly led him to make friends with the Indians, particularly those of the lower peninsula. Not long afterwards the state was divided into three dioceses, the one known as the Grand Rapids Diocese being entrusted to the Most Reverend Henry Joseph Richter. This clergyman from Cincinnati had been educated in Rome, and was a great scholar, hence we can easily believe that the first labor of his diocese was the fostering of religious education among the young. Early in his pastorate the Bishop endeavored to secure religious teachers to aid him in his work for souls.

All the priests of the new diocese were in sympathy with the objectives of their Bishop. One of the most ardent supporters of his policies was Reverend Father Ziegler, pastor of St. Francis parish, Traverse City, Michigan. Six years prior to the establishment of the Grand Rapids diocese,

and while he was still under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Detroit, Father Ziegler made a momentous decision. In the early days people were widely scattered over extensive parishes, making it difficult for priests adequately to minister to their people. Father Ziegler realized that if his labors were to bear permanent fruit he must have schools. Many were his pleas to directors of teaching Sisters, but his efforts seemed vain. At last he turned to the Dominican Convent of the Holy Rosary in New York. Mother Hyacinth recognized the hand of God in this latest request for Sisters, for were not her dying Superior's words a mandate in this instance? The priest in the far off peninsula was evidently the agent through which Mother Augustine's prophecy should see its fulfillment.

Five Sisters were promised to supplement the work of the overburdened priest. Volunteers for the new foundation must needs be hardy souls, ready to forego all the comforts of their well-ordered home in the East. Sister Aquinata was asked to stop in the midst of her building enterprise and accompany the Sisters to Michigan. She was asked to return as soon as possible after getting the Sisters established. Her superiors little dreamed that it was, after all, her unique ability that would truly "dot the peninsula with Dominican foundations."

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mistaken as to his position. He was a member
his father was a member of the
Many were his friends and his
his efforts were not in vain. He was a member
Government of the United States. He was a member
recognized the fact that he was a member
for more and more people. He was a member
infamous. The people of the United States
the same thing. He was a member
see the following.

Five minutes after the
the overhauled engine. He was a member
must needs be made. He was a member
of such well-organized men. He was a member
stayed so long in the hospital. He was a member
secondary the United States. He was a member
as soon as possible. He was a member
New Republic. He was a member
not as active as before. He was a member
Hospital. He was a member

On October 22, 1877, the five Sisters left for their new home. Travel in those days was arduous and dangerous. Slow, tedious days passed before they reached their destination. Hazards, trials, and weariness, however, were soon forgotten when the Sisters arrived in Traverse City to take up their new responsibilities. The joy of the people was unbounded when they welcomed the "white angels" into their midst. Small, cramped quarters were the scene of happy work for Christ's little ones. The Monday following their arrival in Michigan, the Sisters opened school with six pupils.

Just two years later Sister Aquinata rejoiced the little band by returning to Michigan to share the labors of the apostolate. Well she understood the importance of this, the first mission among the many that would cover the peninsula of fair promise.

The zealous Bishop Richter, alive to the spiritual danger threatening the children of his flock who were obliged to attend the public schools where no mention of God was heard, was most urgent in his demand that every parish should found its Catholic school at the earliest opportunity, and his pastors were prompt in their acquiescence. Their parishioners, the majority of whom were poor, were compelled, then as now, to contribute to the support of the public school. The erection and maintenance of parochial schools involved heavy outlays. Therefore pastors questioned: "Where shall we find reliable, competent, frugal teachers for our parochial schools?" Mother Aquinata's little community answered the demands.⁴

⁴ Sister Mary Philomena Kildee, O.P., Memoirs of Mother Mary Aquinata Feigler, O.P. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Bayne, 1928), p. 80.

To provide for the constant and insistent demands for Sisters in the Michigan schools, the Sisters in New York were often forced to double duty. Hardships greeted the newcomers in every instance, but, nothing daunted, they went steadily forward. Mother Aquinata was their chief support in all difficulties. Students conversant with the ability of the average teacher of post Civil War days in Michigan realize what a difference there must have been between them and the well-trained Dominican teachers. Since teaching was in those days a haphazard affair, with more emphasis on the switch than on instruction, it followed that parents were eager to place their children with the Sisters at the first opportunity.

In the late 80's it became evident that the New York Motherhouse could not continue to supply Sisters for the Michigan schools. The Right Reverend Bishop, collaborating with Mother Aquinata, concluded that the only way to insure development in the work of education in his diocese was to secure autonomy for the new province. Such a status was established, and girls were then accepted and trained for teaching in their native state. Many young women from the best families sought admission, eagerly accepting the hardships of classroom and kitchen.

The first school accepted in the present city of

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Grand Rapids, Michigan, was opened on September 2, 1889.

Twenty-five years later one of the Redemptorist priests in charge of the parish said:

"Since September 2, 1889, St. Alphonsus school has been blessed in having those holy and learned teachers, Sisters of Saint Dominic, who have given up home and friends to consecrate their lives and energies to the cause of Catholic education. Needless to say, those who have trodden the rugged path of knowledge under the Sisters' skillful guidance and have from day to day and from grade to grade, seen the lessons of virtue which they taught exemplified in their own daily lives, will ever remember with deepest appreciation the love and care bestowed upon them by those zealous and devoted teachers.⁵

St. Dominic, himself, had a great care and love for the orphan. Emulating their patron, the Sisters accepted charge of the first Catholic orphanage in the new diocese. Mother Aquinata's devotion to these little homeless children was beautiful to see. Through trials and sickness among the orphans, Mother could always be trusted to stand shoulder to shoulder with her Sisters who were in charge of them. All through a particularly severe epidemic of diphtheria she literally never slept until the danger was past. During the epidemic in the orphanage a young and promising Sister was in attendance upon the children. When she contracted the dread disease, Mother nursed her day and night until the novice was taken in death.

⁵ Kildee, op. cit., p. 60.

Grand Jurors, Mr. J. H. ...

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From the very outset Bishop Richter had set as an objective Christian education as set forth by the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore. Prior to the Council, held in 1884, a system prevailed which permitted each parochial school to exist independent of others. By a decree of the Council, a diocesan school board headed by the Bishop was made mandatory. As coordinator he was obliged to introduce exact system, supervise textbooks, and provide for capable teachers. In practice the board was unwieldy and in time was supplanted by the more efficient Superintendent of Schools. The latter official functions most effectively in the schools today. So earnest was the Bishop to see that all things were done well in the schools that he made a yearly tour of his diocese, more especially the schools.

Of the harmonious relationship existing between the Bishop and Mother Aquinata in things educational, Community chronicles record:

For more than fifty years the diocese of Grand Rapids was the unique beneficiary of the faith, zeal, and heroic charity of these revered co-workers. One cannot doubt that it was largely through their efforts that in 1913, near the close of the good Bishop's career, Michigan ranked sixth among the states of the Union in numbers of children attending parochial schools. The rapidity of the extension of Catholic education may be judged from the fact that from 1905 until 1913, twenty-one new schools were accepted by the Community. The fact that in 1927 there were over five hundred Dominican Sisters working in the diocese of Grand Rapids, with a total of some eleven thousand children under their care attests to the remarkable

enterprise initiated under the leadership of that vallant leader, Mother M. Aquinata some forty years previously.⁶

When Mother Aquinata died in 1915, her Community numbered nearly four hundred Sisters, had charge of forty-two parish schools, two central high schools, two academies, and one orphanage,--a fair start toward the fulfillment of Mother Augustine's prophecy.

After a short administration under Mother M. Gonsalva, the Community was entrusted to the leadership of Mother M. Benedicta O'Rourke, a woman imbued with the qualities of mind and heart needed to carry on the best traditions of the Dominican Order. Under her able administration the Congregation was destined to continue the remarkable growth characteristic of the first years. It was under her direction that Sacred Heart College was opened in 1922. That institution was an outgrowth of the Normal School begun under her supervision in 1910. It was accredited by the state and was empowered to grant life certificates.

Mother M. Eveline Mackey was elected to the office in 1927. As a child she had been trained under Mother Aquinata and had come under her wise counseling all through her religious life. She was admirably well-fitted for the

⁶ Unpublished Annals in the archives at the Motherhouse. Grand Rapids, Michigan.

arduous duties awaiting her as Mother General of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids. State requirements for teaching had been stepped up, and in order to meet them in the numerous schools under her jurisdiction Mother was faced with many difficulties. Young girls entering the Community were obliged to have, in addition to their religious training, two years of college work before they could be certified for teaching. High schools accredited with the University of Michigan and the North Central Association needed more Sisters with specialized training to meet their requirements. It was almost impossible to release any of them for study during the academic year; hence most of them had to advance themselves by attending summer schools.

The major institutions of higher learning in the United States, Catholic University, Columbia, Notre Dame, Loyola, Marquette, Detroit, and the University of Michigan, as well as the state colleges, have Grand Rapids Dominicans on their honor rolls. The Sorbonne and other well-known European universities have enrolled members of the same Community. Though originally their mission was dedicated to education in the elementary schools, each year finds more prepared to teach in college and secondary schools. And still they have not lost the "common touch", for their work is to this day in a predominant degree as Christ Himself

would have it, teaching and caring for the children of the people.

Whether children of states other than Michigan were to have the benefit of instruction under the Grand Rapids Dominican Sisters was a question that twice had to be decided. In 1929, one school was opened in Melville, Saskatchewan, at the earnest petition of a Canadian priest. That school was set up on the Canadian plan, so different from the one prevailing in the United States. To prepare teachers for that school, Sisters were sent to various Canadian universities to meet their requirements. Though there have been thirty girls from Melville and surrounding cities who entered the Dominican Community as a result of their contact with the Sisters, it would seem inadvisable to accept other schools in Canada. At the present time there are but two American Sisters there, the balance of the faculty of a complete high school and elementary department being made up of Canadian girls now members of the Community.

Earlier, in 1925, it devolved upon Mother Benedicta to decide whether it was feasible to open schools in New Mexico. Once convinced that it was merely broadening the scope of her Community's usefulness, she completed plans for the undertaking. Mother Eveline, thoroughly in sympathy with the former Mother General's policy, sent Sisters to the

Southwest, often after receiving and refusing offers to accept schools in more advantageous centers. When all the accomplishments and blessings that attended the work in New Mexico are weighed in the balance perhaps the advantages that might have accrued in the larger areas become less significant. Certainly the story of seventeen years of service to the children of New Mexico by the Sisters is worthy of the best Dominican traditions.

Southwest, after other schools, and
about schools in the surrounding territory.
Accordingly, and likewise, that the
New Mexico was visited in the summer of 1900
that it had been growing in the largest extent
attained. Certainly the growth of the
service to the children of New Mexico is
worthy of the best American attention.

CHAPTER III

DOMINICAN SISTERS IN NEW MEXICO

Rather appropriately, the second half century of educational efforts of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan, began with their accepting new responsibilities. Once more the Community was to prove its merits as true followers of St. Dominic. Recently the following was written of his Order:

The gifts that were most conspicuous in him have always been the most conspicuous in his Order, and must always remain so as long as it worthily perpetuates his name and prospers in the vocation he has bequeathed to it.¹

The quality of universal charity inherent in the Order itself prompted the Sisters to go far afield once more--this time to New Mexico.

This fruitful enterprise had its genesis in the second decade of the twentieth century. Many avenues of expansion for the Order were opening up, but it was not mere chance that directed the Community to take up the work in the Southwest. About 1923, Father Peter Kuppers organized a little parochial school in Dixon, New Mexico, a remote village in Rio Arriba County. History has repeated itself many times in the course of the existence of the Grand Rapids

¹ John Baptiste Reeves, O.P., The Dominicans (London: Sheed and Ward, 1929), p. 54.

Dominicans, and here was repetition of the story of Father Ziegler, responsible for establishing the Sisters in Michigan. The New Mexico priest, too, decided that a school was necessary if his labors were to have permanent value.

When he established the school no course was open to him but to hire secular teachers. The priest made many sacrifices to raise the money for their salary. Primarily, however, it was not work nor money that worried him. He longed for the stability that a religious Community would give to the education and preservation of the faith of the little ones of his flock. Where religious indifference in the home and proselytizing tactics of certain sects were robbing his Spanish-American children of their precious heritage, something had to be done quickly.

Inasmuch as it would be necessary for a Community not only to provide for all the needs of the Sisters sent to New Mexico but also to assist the parish in many ways, it was not surprising that the priest's requests for Sisters did not get a favorable hearing from some Communities in the East. Indirectly, while he was at Notre Dame early in 1925, Father Kupperts learned of the work of the Grand Rapids Dominicans. He went immediately to Marywood, the Motherhouse, to make a personal petition for Sisters. Once more Mother Aquinata's Community, now grown larger and administered by younger hands,

yet emulating her broad charity, was to meet the exigencies of a trying situation.

The same year Pope Pius XI requested many American Communities of Sisters to supply volunteer candidates for service in the foreign missions. The Dominican Sisters would be glad to help, and now came a priest seeking Sisters for his little mountain school in New Mexico. What would the answer of the Superiors be to each? Should the pastor of a remote mountain district of our own country take precedence over China or India? Father Koppers pleaded his cause valiantly; he would yield no point in favor of the foreign missions. If only they would send a few Sisters who needed the warm, dry climate, he would guarantee everything necessary to build them into strong, active allies of his work.

There was no Mother Augustine this time to bid extension of the missionary work of the Order, but at the head of the Community was a worthy successor of that valiant woman, Mother Benedicta O'Rourke who took counsel with her advisors and promised the New Mexico Padre they would seriously consider his request. One factor that operated favorably toward the proposal was the nationality of the people in New Mexico. Had not Dominic Guzman, a noble Spaniard of old Castile, given up his native land to carry the light of truth into France? Could they, then, do less

...the committee has found that ...
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than fare forth in behalf of Dominic's own people?

At that time some members of the original Michigan foundation were still alive to rehearse the joys of triumphing over their early hardships and tribulations. No doubt they eagerly awaited the outcome of a venture the like of which they themselves had initiated. In April, 1925, Mother Benedicta and her assistant, Sister M. Loyola, made a trip to New Mexico to obtain first-hand information about conditions under which the Sisters would work. They reported favorably on the project, and once more wheels were set in motion for extending Community effort to new fields. Four Sisters were to be chosen to leave the following August to take over the distant school and have it in readiness for September.

Had it been a choice of missionaries for foreign lands there could not have been much more concern than that displayed over the New Mexico mission. As might have been expected, in a democratic organization, there were differences of opinion concerning the project itself, and it was natural to expect that not all would gladly undertake the new work so far from home. Mother Benedicta made no appointments but wisely asked for volunteers. Dozens signified their eagerness to join the vanguard into the Southwest. Before she made a choice from among them, however, the superior

abstracted all the glamor from the situation and explained very realistically the hardships entailed. The spirit evinced was not unlike that of the five volunteers from Ratisbon in 1853, as described by Christine Sevier.

Finally, four Sisters were chosen, they being Sisters Amata, Theodosia, Mechtilde, and Ernesta. The first of these loved missionary work; the orphans having been the special beneficiaries of her charity. All four were excellent teachers, though the latter two were not robust of health.

On the trip from Santa Fe to Dixon the travelers had their first unusual experience. A mountain stream had swollen considerably as the result of a heavy rain and was then impassable. The chauffeur had to wade the stream and ask for someone to pull them out with a team. It was not long before a large group of children had gathered on the shore, not too concerned with the plight of the party, but curious to see what the newcomers looked like. Nothing serious happened, and the passengers went their way, eager to know what experiences awaited them. Later that day, perched on boxes before a meagerly furnished table in surroundings typical of an eighteenth century setting, the Sisters enjoyed their first meal in their new home. It was, singularly enough, August 4th, the feast day of the

represented all the... very realistic... evidence was not... Exclusion in 1933... finally, the... mass, the... these... special... last... health... On the... their... swollen... these... and for... long... there, not... curious to see... nervous happened... so know what... perched on... authorizing... pleasure enjoyed... slightly enough...

Dominican Order. The Sisters probably thought of the celebration even then going on in their beloved Motherhouse, but not with regret, for they had not left home and family to seek luxury or even comforts, and they were neither disappointed nor discouraged.

The same eagerness which had characterized parents in New York and Michigan when first "the white Sisters" arrived in their midst was manifested in New Mexico. Within a few days of their arrival, the newcomers had taken stock. Much that they had been accustomed to at home was missing, but what of that? Here were starry-eyed children eager for what the Sisters were eminently qualified to give,--opportunity to acquire knowledge. For the seventy children who had been attending the parochial school under lay teachers there promised to be twice that number. Many children came to school to help the Hermanas get everything in readiness for the opening. September of 1925 was a red letter month in the life of that community. The first year there were nine grades with a total enrollment of 125. As will be further discussed in Chapter IV, education had many ramifications in that first school. The three "r's" had shrunk into comparative insignificance in the locality where general health was greatly below par, where home conditions were poor, and where the spirit of cooperation burned quite low. And four Sisters

to remedy it all!

It has been argued by some that no matter how well prepared the Sisters were in every other respect for the task ahead of them, they were doomed to failure if they could not speak the language of the people. Those who have experienced the trouble of teaching foreign-children can judge of the wisdom of the Superiors who substantiated their decision with expert advice. The direct method of instruction was suggested as the best way to teach English to Spanish children.

Even then the Superintendent of Public Instruction of New Mexico was struggling against the lackadaisical approach to the language problem in most of the rural sections of the state. Though the law specifically ruled that English must be used in teaching all subjects, here were pupils coming into school, some of them no longer children, scarcely knowing a word of English. One twenty-three-year-old boy asked admission into the sixth grade in such poor English that he could not be understood without an interpreter. Assuredly it was English, not Spanish instruction they needed then.

Father Kuppers had secured the help of a benevolent group of women in the East known as the Catholic Ladies of Columbia. During the first ten years that the school operated these women contributed towards its financial

to receive it.

It is not necessary to say that the
proposed the first step in every case is to
take account of this, and to make a
good use of the results of the work. The
experience of the world is that the
judge of the value of the work is the
decision of the expert. The expert
has to be asked to give an opinion on
the value of the work.

When the decision is made, it is
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support, but a good deal depended on the pastor. From the time the Sisters came, however, the Motherhouse helped greatly toward their maintenance. So eager were the Sisters for materials with which to work that they called often on the more than sixty convents of their own Sisters and people in Michigan for supplies and money. Since 1935, when support of the Catholic Ladies was withdrawn in favor of other projects, the school and convent have been supported largely by the Motherhouse, with donations from the beloved Archbishop of Santa Fe never failing. Wood for fuel is the only donation asked of the people.

An influx of pupils from far and near made further demands on the Dixon school. In 1926, a second year of high school work was added; both high school classes were carried on until 1928, when it was no longer possible to maintain the secondary department. Continuous increase in the grade school enrollment and the inability of the Community to supplement further the teaching staff led to the discontinuance of the two-year high school. It seemed a wiser policy to provide an adequate foundation for pupils and then let them go elsewhere to a well-equipped high school if they could.

December 23, 1928, fire consumed the church, school, and convent. The fire was a blow to the plans of the Padre

and the Sisters, and, coming as it did just before Christmas, it added another hardship. Everyone in the village joined the fire brigade and succeeded in saving most of the furniture from the three buildings. Meager as it was, the loss of it would have meant cessation of the work for some time.

All school furniture was moved into two dance halls, the Sisters accepting cheerfully the inconveniences involved. Those unpleasant conditions existed until January, 1930, when the new school built by Father Kuppers was opened. Because the pupils were so insistent again in 1933 that they should have a high school at home, an old residence nearby was renovated and made to serve for a high school building. For nearly four years it was used, until 1937 when His Excellency, the Archbishop, arranged for the erection of a new structure near the grade school.

In 1925, when the Dixon school was opened, children came who lived many miles from the village. Had Father Kuppers any means of providing for them, the hundreds of his children scattered over a vast parish would have been attending his "dream school" at Dixon. From every avenue of approach, big children and little ones made their way each morning. Many parents from distant missions arranged to have their children stay with friends or relatives in Dixon.

Among the latter were several families from Peñasco,

a little mountain village some seventeen miles to the north. Enthusiasm for the excellent opportunities to be enjoyed under the Sisters vied with the poverty that prohibited extra levies on the family income. Was it possible to get the Sisters for their own little two-room school in Penasco? Interested individuals in family and parish councils finally demanded that something be done. The Motherhouse in Grand Rapids could not accept very many schools to be supported as was being done in Dixon, and the people themselves could do so little. No whit less determined, the pastor and people set about another plan. If they could not have a parochial school, they might yet have a public school with Sisters for teachers. It had been done elsewhere, and why not here? Besides, had not several officials from the State Department of Education commented favorably on the work of the Sisters in Dixon?

Immediately after a petition to the Taos County School Board had been acted upon favorably, arrangements were made to employ four Sisters in the public school. The school, begun some years before, was completed. The County Board had agreed to pay the salaries of the Sisters, but conditioned their contract upon the ability of the community of Penasco to furnish adequate buildings. Hence the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, acting through Father Koppers, agreed to pay the

cost of building and furnishings for a period of years. By dint of much hard work and the cooperative effort of people and priest, the four-room school was ready by October, 1926. The old District 30 Schoolhouse was abandoned for the new quarters. The new rooms, built to accommodate a larger group of children than the anticipated enrollment, were taxed to capacity almost from the start.

Sisters Theodosia, Seraphine, Sienna, and Loraine, who were appointed to teach in Peñasco, were qualified and experienced teachers; they needed all that and more to cope with the new situation. Sister Theodosia had opened the school at Dixon and was now acquainted with the type of organization and work necessary to put the new school on an efficient basis. Fortunately for them and the success of the work, they were all gifted with that genius which depends more on hard work than upon inspiration. Temporary quarters for the Sisters consisted of a small adobe house, really unfit for their use. Fall rains and winter snows penetrated the leaky roof, often spoiling books and clothing. Living under such conditions, the Sisters were often ill, but missionary work they had accepted, and in true missionary spirit they minimized the hardships incident to it. To provide more suitable living quarters for the Sisters, the Motherhouse bought a piece of property near the school and

remodeled the house into a very good dwelling.

Enrollment the first day of school in Peñasco was ninety-three. Before the end of the year, however, there were that many in the primary room; the total school enrollment mounted to 215. Father was a school director at the time and had considerable influence with his people. There were some who deliberately criticized the motives of the Sisters in coming to Peñasco, and those few caused some disturbance. However, it was the will of the majority that brought the Sisters to Peñasco, and those malcontents, and they were that chiefly because they could no longer manipulate the school for political purposes, were forced to capitulate. Actually, had the motives of the Sisters been less well entrenched in unselfish devotion to duty, the story might have had another ending. As promoter of the move to secure the services of the Sisters for the Peñasco school, Father Kupperts was subjected to considerable criticism from his opponents. He was equal to his adversaries, however, and placidly went his way planning further development of the work in hand.

Taos County records indicate that five and six month terms were the rule in the 20's. The whole area was hide-bound in the tradition which forced little children to tend flocks while the father sought work elsewhere; it took much

effort to overcome such ideas and to keep children in school. Older residents say that there was not much to respect in those district schools employing teachers little better qualified to teach than they themselves were. That spirit of opposition to organized education broke down under the persuasive influence of the Sisters, and the children themselves convinced their parents that it was best for them to be in school regularly and for the full term. Seven full months were prescribed in 1926, and the Sisters maintained that schedule for a couple of years. Later, though the salary allowance was but for seven, the grade school was held in session for full eight months, the last month under parochial regulation. When the county schools received salary for six months, the Sisters fared the same, yet they always felt it was worthwhile to carry on for the eight with little hope of receiving payment even for the entire seven months contracted for.

Under date of April 28, 1926, the County Superintendent petitioned the State Board of Education for accreditation of the upper grades of the Penasco school as a junior high school.

I have a school in the southern part of the county with an average attendance of 156, including grades from first to ninth. The eighth and ninth grades have been conducted on the principles of a junior high school for the past term. The teacher in charge of

this work holds a legal Junior High School certificate, and is assisted, when necessary, by another who also holds a Junior High School certificate. The average attendance in the eighth and ninth grades is around 20.

The school is located at Peñasco in the center of a beautiful valley. It is also located in the center of a number of school districts which have a total enrollment of 600. . . .I wish to recommend the upper grade work of this school for accreditation by the State Board as a Junior High School for the term 1927-1928.²

As early as 1926 a state official wrote that he was desirous of seeing a high school located at Peñasco and would do all in his power to assure its realization.

Many of the enrollees during those first years listed their age as sixteen years. They were eager to get into school, and lowering their age was one way to avoid complications. Besides, one could not be expected to know as much at sixteen as at twenty-one.

The Peñasco school was accredited as a two-year high school in 1928. When the High School Supervisor made an inspection of the school in October, 1929, he reported favorably for a continuance of that rating. This accrediting stood until January, 1930, when the State Board, anticipating the graduation of three pupils the following May, ranked the school as a fully accredited high school. The following letter was received from the County Superintendent upon the

² Letter from Floyd Santistevan to the State Board of Education, April 28, 1926.

This school holds a large number of pupils and is easily the largest in the county. It is situated on the corner of the main highway and is attended in the winter and spring months.

The school is located on the corner of the main highway and is attended in the winter and spring months. It is situated on the corner of the main highway and is attended in the winter and spring months.

As early as 1875 a state official wrote that the school of the county was the best in the state.

Many of the pupils of the school were from the best families in the county. They were well educated and were well known in the county.

The school was established in 1875. It was the first school in the county. It was the first school in the county. It was the first school in the county.

Letter from the State Board of Education, April 20, 1930.

action of the Board:

"It is a great pleasure for me to inform you that the Peñasco High School has been accredited by the State Board of Education as a regular four-year high school. I certainly wish to extend my congratulations to you and your faculty and commend you upon your work in bringing up the school to such a high standard.³"

At the first graduation exercises were many school people of the state who looked approvingly on the success of the only high school in southern Taos County. One official speaker on the program enthusiastically praised the quality of work being done in both grades and high school. She stated that the Peñasco school should receive honorable mention at the Los Angeles meeting of the National Education Association the next month. A few days later she wrote asking to use some articles made by children in the primary grades for the exhibit at the meeting.

The acting High School Supervisor in 1932 again reported on the excellence of the work being accomplished under well-qualified teachers. Included in that report were statements testifying to the excellent condition of the buildings, equipment, and records. Inasmuch as the teaching load was very heavy for the high school teachers, the supervisor recommended the hiring of another teacher.

³ Letter from Floyd Santistevan to Sister Clare Brophy, Principal of Penasco High School, dated January 30, 1931.

High school pupils numbered forty in 1931. The grade school enrollment was also increasing so rapidly that it was no longer possible to accommodate both groups in the one building even though additional rooms had been added to the original four. Parents from other districts than Number 30 had contributed to the erection of the school and were privileged to send their children to Peñasco. Naturally, that tended to over-crowd classrooms. To relieve the pressure as well as to make way for further development of the high school, a building was planned for erection some distance from the grade school on ample grounds. On October 7, 1931, the cornerstone for the new high school was laid.

Pending its completion, the grade school pupils of the first two grades, numbering more than one hundred, had to be taken care of in the old district school house. One Sister, teaching the third and fourth grades, had seventy-six in her classroom. There was rejoicing for the overworked Sisters when they were allowed to return to the new school after the high school pupils were moved to their own building in February, 1932. In spite of overcrowded conditions, language handicap, sickness, and many other difficulties, the high quality of work known to be done by the Sisters teaching the first two grades was so marked that they were asked to give a demonstration at the State Teachers Convention held

in Santa Fe, November 5 and 6, 1931. Later that month a sectional meeting of the Taos County Teachers Association was held at Penasco at which four Sisters gave demonstrations. Visitors were so numerous that soon neither teachers nor pupils even noted their coming and going. Father Koppers was very proud of his school and the interest it created in better teaching and many were the officials he brought to classrooms to show them what was being done. He was justly proud and enthusiastic about it all.

The new high school, also built under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, was made large enough to take care of future growth. Based on experience it was not presumptuous to anticipate a steady increase in the high school enrollment. Time has proved the wisdom of the plan. One outstanding feature of the new building was the arrangement whereby all doors could be opened to accommodate large assemblies. That was a considerable gain in ^acommunity where there was no community center. Five classrooms, two large domestic science workrooms, and an office were provided for. In 1936 a shop building, constructed by the wood-working class and their instructor, was added to the school plant.

To eliminate politics from education in Penasco, a request was made to the State Board of Education to establish an independent status for District 30. In April, 1933, the

the petition was granted and the district was released from control of the Taos County Board. On the whole, the new arrangement served to step up rather than retard advancement in the community and its schools. Father Koppers was chosen superintendent under the new setup. When he resigned because of ill health the office was filled by a qualified Sister. It has been so managed ever since. From the beginning scholarship, professional training, and a sympathy for the Spanish-American people, rather than political preferment, have been requirements for teachers hired for the Peñasco system.

Once more the outstanding merits of the Dominican Sisters as educators reacted favorably on interested people in the state. Because their work had been so successful in Dixon and Penasco, the priests in Santa Cruz and San Juan asked to have the services of the Sisters in their schools. Mrs. Adelina Otero Warren, Santa Fe County Superintendent, also worked diligently to place the Dominican Sisters in the Santa Cruz school, believing that many advantages would accrue to the children under their care. Requests were made to the respective county school boards to hire Sisters for the future years. So enthusiastic were the local board members in Santa Cruz that they immediately requested the Mother General to provide Sisters for the following year,

1927-28. Too many demands were then being made for Sisters in the Michigan parochial schools, and no Sisters could be spared for New Mexico that year. Anticipating the fulfillment of a promise of Sisters for the following year, the Santa Cruz parish erected a convent and had it ready for occupancy when the three Sisters appointed to teach arrived. Two of them, Sisters Seraphine and Sienna, who had been teaching in Penasco, were asked to open the Santa Cruz school. In addition, Sister M. Leonissa, a newcomer from Michigan, was appointed. Sister M. Amata, one of the pioneers in New Mexico, gave lessons on the piano and trained the children for choir service in the Church. Her time was given gratis, and these music-loving children entered into this work with great enthusiasm.

The early history of education in Santa Cruz is very interesting. Prior to 1905, no regular county system of schools had been obtained in Santa Cruz. Beginning in 1850, certain leaders in the community gave instructions in reading and writing to groups of children in private homes. Schools were in session for two or three months during the winter; attendance was irregular and not compulsory. The school day lasted through the daylight hours. Pupils gathered at daybreak and after a few hours of study returned home for breakfast; they then returned to school and remained

1927-28. Two many teachers were then being paid for January
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most of a series of letters for the following year, the
Santa Cruz parish erected a convent and had in 1927 the
convent when the three sisters appeared to have arrived.
Two of them, Sisters Benedictine and Eliza, who had been known
long in Mexico, were asked to open the Santa Cruz school.
In addition, Sister M. Leonides, a nun from Mexico,
was appointed. Sister M. Leonides, one of the nuns in the
Mexico, gave lessons on the place and helped the children
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and these multi-colored children entered into this with
great enthusiasm.

The early history of education in Santa Cruz is very
interesting. Prior to 1902, no regular country school of
schools had been opened in Santa Cruz. According to 1902,
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and existing to groups of children in private houses.
Schools were in session for two or three months during the
winter; attendance was irregular and not compulsory. The
school day lasted through the winter season. During
gathered at the house and after a few days of study resumed
more for progress; they then returned to school and remained

until dusk. The only books available were two Spanish readers, Book I and Book II. Besides one of these readers and a slate, each child was obliged to bring daily a stick of wood for fuel. Frequently there was not sufficient fuel furnished in this way to provide warmth for the whole day and school had often to be dismissed during extremely cold days.

Instruction was given in the Spanish language only; no word of English was heard. A district board was elected each year, and members of that board had supreme control over the school. They hired teachers without any regard to qualifications. As a rule a member of the district board, by virtue of his office, could be, and often was, a teacher. In 1900, the district erected a small building for a school-house. The one-room was soon outgrown and the four-room unit constituting the old part of what is now the Santa Cruz High School was built.

In 1908, John B. Conway was elected County Superintendent of Santa Fe County. His first objective was a system of consolidated schools wherein better instruction was possible. All one-room school districts were consolidated into the Santa Cruz district. Building materials, as well as a carpenter, were furnished by the county; making and laying adobes constituted the contribution of the people

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of the district.

When the Sisters took over the school in 1928 there was an enrollment of 185 pupils in grades one to eight. The following year a junior high school was organized; it continued to operate until 1931, when a senior high organization became operative. In the same year the school was accredited by the State Board as a three-year high school; the next year it was accredited as a four-year high school. The enrollment increased so rapidly that new rooms had to be arranged for. The first move was to partition off one end of the hall to be used as a recitation room. In 1929, two new study halls were added, the work being done chiefly by boys in the manual training department, then organized as part of the regular curriculum. Adobes were once more furnished by the people of the community. Unlike the situation at Penasco, these buildings were owned by the school district, and, as such, subject to its jurisdiction.

Sister Seraphine, the principal, could never rest on her oars, so in 1930 the boys undertook another building project, at which time a much needed woodworking shop and domestic science laboratory were erected. During the summer of 1934 a new science laboratory, commercial room, and two classrooms were added to the building. Enrollment in 1931 skyrocketed to 365, bringing a mandate from the County

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Superintendent to the effect that all children outside of the district should return to their own district schools. Parents objected to the proscription and many moved into the Santa Cruz district and claimed residence there.

As early as 1934 bus lines were established and high school students transported from Pojoaque, Nambe, and El Rancho, increasing the high school enrollment from sixty-five to one hundred sixty. Another bus line started operating from Chimayo in 1935, this time boosting the enrollment to tax the classroom capacity.

A promise had been made to Father Pajot, pastor of San Juan, to send Sisters for the school at Chamita. In 1929 that promise was fulfilled when Sister Loyola and Sister Leonissa opened the school. As in Santa Cruz, a new convent had been erected and furnished for the Sisters when they took over the public school. An old residence, renovated to make two large classrooms, was rented by the Rio Arriba County School Board. Classes were begun there on October 1, 1929, with an initial enrollment of sixty pupils. That number rapidly increased to ninety-eight and the same year a third teacher was employed by the Board. The fact that there were but two classrooms deterred the people not at all; they wanted their children with the Sisters and they would provide a room. A garage was used that year as

a classroom, with children as happy in it as any in much more pretentious quarters. Later, the county erected a fine, spacious school building, yet not large enough to take care of increased attendance due to consolidation. A part of the old building is still in use, needed to accommodate the more than two hundred children in the grades.

The deep faith of these simple people in the influence of the Sisters on their children made a lasting impression on the Sisters. An excerpt from the annals of the San Juan convent gives an impression of one of the Sister's first pupils.

He enrolled for the fifth grade, although he could neither speak nor understand a word of English. The good Eastern Dominican must be given credit for much self-control when she falters not in instruction with such a distracting picture before her. Good Leopoldo's age is 15. He is of stalwart build, some five feet ten in height. Buffalo Bill, could he look in on our western cowboy, would surely envy him his immense black hat, fully two feet in diameter. His blue jeans are set off by a great-sized flowing tie flashing colors of pink, blue, yellow, and green. Of his footwear, only spurs are missing to make the picture complete. During recess he sits with his hands upon his knees and looks down quietly and proudly upon those playing simple games. Surely a perfect Spanish gentleman in manners and conduct.⁴

Time and again the work of the Sisters was commended by Rio Arriba County superintendents and supervisors. Parents were delighted with the progress of their children.

⁴ Annals of San Juan Convent, 1929.

They realized, too, that such improvement was accomplished only by extraordinary hard work and patience of the Sisters, qualities inculcated in the Sisters by their own training as Religious and as teachers.

It was not long before the Dominican Sisters were persuaded to accept another school. This time they were to go far down the Rio Grande to Belen. St. Mary's School had been built and opened as a parochial school supported by tuition and conducted by the Ursuline Sisters. There were about two hundred children in the grade school. After five years they found it impossible to carry on in the school because of lack of support and inability to supply more teachers. The latter difficulty was solved when the Belen Board of Education agreed to accept the school as part of the public school system. The first found its solution in the willingness of the Dominican Sisters to take charge of it. Accordingly, in the fall of 1933, three Dominican Sisters went to Belen to teach. They were Sisters Mechtilde, Norberta, and Mary Therese. The first of these three was among the original number in Dixon. They, together with Father Paul Dwyer, O.S.M., made up the faculty. Father Dwyer taught the seventh and eighth grades and acted in the capacity of principal. He remained in charge of the school until January, 1935, when he was forced to resign due to

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pressure of parish duties. One of the Sisters then took charge of the school, and this arrangement still exists.

All seventh and eighth grade pupils of Belen were removed to the new junior high school building in 1937, thus removing two grades from St. Mary's. However, the enrollment there continues to increase, there being more than three hundred pupils in 1940.

Once more northern New Mexico was to bid for the services of the Sisters. Ranchos de Taos had long been noted for its treasured old church, and the next step was to have a good parochial school. This was planned when the mission was formally raised to the status of a parish in 1935. Most of the Ranchos children were housed in the existing four-room public school or were attending the Presbyterian Mission school, the latter offering much better educational opportunities than did the district schools. The Archbishop appealed to Mother Eveline to send Sisters for the new school. Once more the home office rejected like petitions from parishes in the middle West and sent three Sisters to Ranchos de Taos. When Sisters Eugene Marie, Rose Imelde, and Caritas arrived they found no proper school for them; only an old store and a meeting house were available. That did not seem to count with the people, for when they learned the Sisters actually were in Ranchos they crowded in, irrespective of

which district they belonged to.

As this school was to be definitely parochial, the public school with its four teachers continued to operate with reduced numbers for a time. The first day there were listed sixty-two, but before many days passed there were 112 enrolled. This necessitated the use of a small church sacristy as a classroom. Certainly there was nothing elegant to attract parents or students except the assurance that now Catholic religious teachers were in their midst to give them unselfish service.

In a short time the Taos County School Board requested the services of the Dominican Sisters for the public school system of Ranchos. Though a fine new school building under construction was being erected at the expense of the parish, it would be rented by the School Board and placed under the direction of certified Sisters. Sister Eugene Marie was named the principal with a faculty of two other Sisters and secular teachers for three additional classrooms,--all to function as the public teaching staff of Ranchos de Taos school.

During the summer of 1936 the new parish-building was completed. Too often, however, there has been a lack of sufficient foresight on the part of those who built to understand the unprecedented increase in enrollment sure to follow

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the coming of the Sisters into a school. The four rooms of the new school building in Rancho had to be supplemented by two in the old buildings. These latter were constantly in use until the summer of 1941, when a beautiful new building was erected, this time by the county authorities.

To date the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids have accepted only six schools in New Mexico, one of them parochial and the others operated under the public school systems. They have seen these schools develop into large units under their expert organization and administration. As will be discussed in Chapter IV, they have accomplished much more than the mere dissemination of knowledge. The end for which the Dominican Order was founded has been realized to an undreamed of extent in this great state of New Mexico. Whether there will be more centers into which their sphere of influence will be extended is a question that time must answer, and it will perhaps depend largely upon the number of members available for the work in the Southwest.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Everything in the total picture of life in a community impinges on education; to react on one factor of the whole is definitely to influence all the others for good or bad. Hence a resume of the contributions of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan, to education in New Mexico will require at least a cursory analysis of the social and economic status of the people before and after the Sisters accepted responsibility for education in several areas of the state. After seventeen years the Sisters can contemplate with honest satisfaction their share in the difficult but tremendously important work of education in New Mexico. They have accomplished much, when all the difficulties are weighed. In the parochial school in Dixon, as in the public schools elsewhere, they proved themselves to be an asset one might expect of cultured, religious, and experienced women of ability and zeal.

As has been previously stated, before the Sisters arrived in Dixon, the parochial school had been operating for a few years with a faculty of three lay teachers. The building was small and could accommodate relatively few children. Considering all the circumstances, the teachers

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had enjoyed a modicum of success under the influence of the zealous pastor. In reality they set the stage for the work of the Sisters. In August, 1925, when the Sisters arrived to take over the school, it was as if a new leavening agent had permeated the mass and stirred its latent potentialities. Spontaneously, it would seem, there was germinated an attitude of responsiveness to the challenge to progress issued by the "Hermanas" who were immediately taken into the hearts of these people and seemed to belong to them exclusively. Even the natural reticence of the children could not conceal that attitude, though not by word so much as by action did they imply how happy they were to have religious teachers in their midst.

Despite the good will of the large majority of the people, the Sisters saw before them the task of counteracting ignorance of health practices, primitive notions of sanitation, decadence of political integrity, indifference to economic improvement, a kind of moral and spiritual languor, and the woefully inadequate educational background of many of these rural people. Almost immediately there were signs of an eagerness for improvement, and difficulties were never considered too great if cooperation were forthcoming from the few community leaders.

The organization to which the Sisters belong unites

them in a common philosophy and purpose. From the earliest days of their religious and professional training they are brought face to face with the profound responsibility they assume to give to the youth in their charge a deeply Christian education. They have always taken with great seriousness the words of Pope Pius XI.

The ultimate objectives of education are the ultimate objectives of life. For the Catholic, accordingly, education consists essentially in preparing man for what he must be and for what he must become here below in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created.¹

Since by their studies the Sisters are convinced that there is an intimate connection between religion and reason, they are led to the important consideration which is vital to the Catholic conception of education that religion is the integrating principle of its life and education. Archbishop John T. McNicholas, the present Archbishop of Cincinnati, has the following to say anent this principle.

The principle that religion is religion, and business is business is utterly false and in the long run wholly ruinous to society. The divorce of religion from business, from education, from political action cannot fail eventually to bring ruin. Every deliberate action of man is either morally good or morally bad. There is no intermediate classification. Business that is not morally good is morally bad. . . . Religion is not a Sunday dress. . . . Religion should

¹ Pope Pius XI: Christian Education of Youth. Catholic Mind, XXVIII, No. 4, p. 62.

There is a common misconception that the
days of spiritual warfare are over and that
the church is now in a state of peace and
security. It is true that the world is
more peaceful than it has been for many
years, but this is only a temporary
truce. The forces of evil are still
active and are working to bring about
the destruction of the church and the
world.

The Christian's duty is to stand firm
in the face of all opposition and to
remain faithful to the teachings of
the Bible. We must not allow ourselves
to be led away by the promises of
the world, the flesh, and the devil.
We must remain vigilant and ready to
fight at all times.

There is a great need for spiritual
warfare today. The forces of evil
are working to bring about the
destruction of the church and the
world. We must stand firm in the
face of all opposition and remain
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We must not allow ourselves to be
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the Bible. We must not allow ourselves
to be led away by the promises of
the world, the flesh, and the devil.
We must remain vigilant and ready to
fight at all times.

I hope this little book will be of
help to you. It is written for
Catholics and Protestants alike.

be an everyday affair and influence every decision made by the human will.²

Although this philosophy was back of the Sisters' training, they could not integrate religious doctrine in the public schools as was done in the parochial schools. (It will be explained later that doctrine was taught outside the school hours.) And so, with little modification the Sisters' system of education could be made to function in the new setting as effectively as it had operated in the old. The native children were entitled to, and would have, the same care and solicitude as the Sisters gave to their charges elsewhere, no matter what the sacrifice entailed for the Sisters.

In addition to that philosophy, the importance of which was paramount for a successful educational venture, the Sisters brought to their new work a thorough training in pedagogical techniques as well as years of experience. The state had not as yet set up strict standards for accrediting rural teachers. Many of them were holding positions with little more preparation than that represented by an eighth grade diploma. Michigan standards were high and even at that time required specific training for teachers in public

² John T. McNicholas, "Mid-lenten Pastoral", The Catholic-Telegraph-Register, CVII: 1-2, April 1, 1938.

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Although this is a large number, it is not
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3 John F. Kennedy
Catholic Education - 1960

and private schools. In 1925 there were very few Sisters in the Grand Rapids Community who did not have their life certificates. Consequently a good number of those who volunteered for service in the New Mexico schools were well equipped. Within a short time they fulfilled the requirements for special courses in New Mexico and secured life certificates.

Many public school teachers in isolated districts must solve their own problems with little help from others. Religious community life, however, affords a more adequate and satisfying way to settle common problems. In the face of new or unusual situations the Sisters sit down to a discussion of ways and means and give and take help from each other. A common bond of sympathy and helpfulness makes for mental and physical health, preventing the breakdown of nerves that often reflects itself in harsh treatment of children. Little devices tried successfully by one Sister are passed on to another, so each one has the advantage of skills and successful techniques of others. Thus were most of the difficulties involved in a new situation in New Mexico settled.

Like most of the Taos County district schools in the earlier years, the Penasco district school was in a poor condition. Most rural school teachers were insecure as to

tenure due to political manipulation, and as a result many of them did not bother much about care of buildings and equipment. School boards were chronically indifferent to conditions, but even interested members could not enlist volunteers to help with repairs. Tax collections were negligible, and there was often no money available to pay to have the work done. As a result buildings and equipment deteriorated rapidly, and few persons attempted to do anything about it. Children could not learn respect for property when their elders manifested none; they occasionally practiced every conceivable type of depredation in and about the schools.

Though the new setup under the Sisters at Penasco was officially recognized as part of the Taos County school system, the buildings and equipment were private property. The "don't-care" attitude disappeared under the efficient management of the Sisters. Children were taught to respect property as a medium through which service could be rendered to all alike. Furniture, though meager, was well taken care of. A number of desks were donated by a benefactor the spring before the Penasco school was opened under Dominican auspices. They were in bad condition due to weathering and previous hard usage. To put children into them would simply have confirmed them in bad habits already acquired. The Sisters

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wielded plane, chisel, and hammer and completely renovated the old furniture. When the enrollment increased and something had to be done to provide more seats, a call to the city for orange and apple boxes, paint and enamel, and both utility and beauty were served. What a contrast to the four bare walls to which the children had been accustomed!

Buildings and equipment in all the schools conducted by the Dominican Sisters have been remarkably well preserved. The Santa Cruz and San Juan buildings are both publicly owned and equipped, but excellent care has been exercised, resulting in great savings for the counties. Each Sister works on the principle that she must do everything that is possible to preserve what she finds in her classroom and to make any additions or improvements she can.

George I. Sanchez has the following to say about the Penasco schools:

The schools at Penasco are operated as an independent system with a local (elective) board which designates a superintendent. The public schools at Penasco, like those in Costilla and a few others elsewhere in the state, harks back to the time when the nuns established parochial schools in these localities. These schools were later recognized as public schools and are also publicly supported, the arrangement resulting in important economies (in buildings, salaries, etc.) to the taxpayers, and, in general, in better education for the children.³

³ George I. Sanchez, Forgotten People, (Albuquerque, New Mexico: The University of New Mexico Press, 1940), p. 76.

Drab, uninspired lives were often lifted into the realm of aesthetic beauty through art and song. Spanish-American children have been noted for native talent in artistic fields of endeavor. Lovely voices were utilized in choir, glee club, and quartette arrangements under the skillful guidance of a Sister instructor. Though it was extremely difficult to purchase musical instruments, the help of friends made it possible to provide sufficient for a high school orchestra of some merit. Music which appealed to the Spanish people was first mastered,--songs, dances, and old familiar melodies. Thus was struck the first note in an incipient public relations program. A natural flair for dramatics among the children has made possible some excellent Spanish plays directed by a Sister conversant with the language. Some distinct advantages have accrued for the mastery of English through short sketches and plays produced for assemblies and programs.

Everywhere there seemed to be an innate craving for spiritual enrichment, and these teachers in a new type of classroom were giving their pupils unusual opportunities for desirable experiences. The little children enrolled the first year under the Sisters at Penasco were entranced when their teacher, a talented artist, painted on the board in vivid colors the story of "Little Red Riding Hood." Sister Sienna smiles when she tells of stopping in the midst of her

Spain, unimagined lives were often lived into the
realm of beautiful beauty through art and song. Spanish-
American children have been noted for native talent in
artistic fields of endeavor. Lovely voices have witnessed
in choir, class choir, and concerted arrangements under the
skilled guidance of a better instructor. Though it was
extremely difficult to procure musical instruments, the
help of friends made it possible to provide instruments for
a high school orchestra of some merit. While plans were
for the Spanish people was first considered,--singing, dancing,
and old familiar melodies. There was a strong desire to
in an independent public relations program, a national effort
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excellent Spanish plays directed by a better conductor with
the language. More children's adventures have occurred for
the mastery of English through short sketches and plays
produced for entertainment and program.

Everywhere there seemed to be an intense craving for
spiritual enrichment, and these teachers in a new type of
classroom were giving their pupils unusual opportunities for
esthetic experiences. The little children enrolled in
first year under the direct of teachers were introduced to
their teacher, a talented artist, painted on the board in
vivid colors the story of "Little Red Riding Hood". Stories
Stanza smiles when she tells of sleeping in the arms of her

work one afternoon to find not the children, but many of the adult population of the village agape at the beauty transpiring before their very eyes. Self-expression through color, song, and story was encouraged in every child.

The first flowers planted in the convent garden attracted wide attention. Many women asked for and received seeds for flowers which had never before bloomed in the locality. Cultivation of beauty about the home probably had its inception in the colorful flower beds in and around the Penasco convent.

Mental hygiene holds an important place in the education of children from economically insufficient homes. Religious ideals furnish the only adequate motive for practicing the moral virtues, basis for well-balanced living. Through the essential culture and refinement inherent in the very lives of the Sisters, they appealed directly to children whose environment was not conducive to great satisfaction. It was not difficult for the people to understand that the Sisters were giving much more time and effort to the needs of their pupils and their families than teachers of the district schools could do, and they appreciated those efforts.

One reason why the Sisters hesitated to accept public schools in the beginning was the enforced deviation from

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their role as religious educators. It was contrary to Community policy to ask Sisters to take classrooms where religion could not be integrated with every subject in the curriculum. But, since nearly all the Spanish children were Catholic and the buildings owned by the parishes, it was permissible to give religious instruction outside the regular school hours. In every case this has been done, certainly to the benefit of children, strengthening them in loyalty to God and country. Despite hardships for pupils and teachers, that phase of education has never been neglected.

Guidance, an important by-product of religious instruction, has served to direct the lives of most of the pupils into socially and economically fruitful lines of endeavor. John M. Brewer, recognized as the foremost authority on guidance and counseling, indicates the need for this type of guidance.

Who can count the waste of teaching the rule of three to a boy who will, the same afternoon, lie, quarrel, and bully, all because he lacks guidance in wise living? Who can compute the human waste of teaching literature to a girl, if she turns, the moment she leaves the school influence, to cheapness and vulgarity, because she has no opportunity to learn how to live in the everyday, out-of-school environment? What profit can possibly accrue, in this or any other world, from the gaining of knowledge when the mode of living is unsatisfactory?⁴

⁴ John M. Brewer, Education As Guidance (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933), p. 10.

their role as religious educators. It is necessary to use
many policies to use wisely to use wisdom where poss-
ible and not to think of it as a subject in the
curriculum. But, also, nearly all the religious education
Catholic and Protestant schools are based on the principle of
parables to give religious instruction within the school
and school hours. In every case, the school should be
aiming to the benefit of children, strengthening their
loyalty to God and country. We are looking for people
and teachers, and the education they give is
valued.

Children, as reported by those who visit them in
education, are never so happy as when they are at
school. They are socially and economically adjusted to
education. John H. Brown, president of the National
Authority on Children and Education, believes that
for this type of education.

And so, the whole of education is a matter of
three to a boy who will, one who is given, the
character, and only, all because of the school
in which he lives. He can become the best of
things if he is given to a child, it is true, the
moment and time the school is given, the education
and character. Because the school is necessary to
learn how to live in the everyday, and at school
only, the school can really make a difference in
this or any other field, from the point of
knowledge from the point of living in education.

And the mode of living was generally unsatisfactory previous to the coming of the Sisters into most of these communities. Retardation for one reason or another found many girls of sixteen or over in the intermediate grades. It was not unusual, the first few years in the Penasco school, to discover girls married before they finished the sixth grade, though wholly unprepared for home-making. Education served to bring down the age level for all grades, and to give boys and girls interest in preparing more adequately for a life work. Scarcely ever, in the schools now conducted by the Sisters, does a grade school boy or girl get married; not many even leave high school to enter the married state. If they do, it is generally the fault of selfish and careless parents.

Too many children have been kept out of school in the fall and obliged to leave early in the spring to go with parents to other states to earn enough money for food and clothing for the winter. In such manner poverty, selfishness, and unhappiness take a heavy toll before children get into high school. Then it is too late and they cannot meet the requirements of interest and good study habits. Through contact and influence with parents attendance is being gradually increased by the Sisters in certain areas.

Two points of view are presented below, one by Sanchez, who, in 1940, wrote: "Not only do classrooms lack

and the school of the...
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many girls of...
it was not...
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Sanchez, who...

the instructional materials and facilities called for by the children's needs, but the teachers are unprepared to improvise educational devices and procedures suited to their communities."⁵ The other, quoted from February, 1934, issue of Contacts, official organ of the Dominican Council of Schools, reverses the picture in schools taught by the Sisters.

The Community supervisors who visited our New Mexico schools last fall found that the Sisters are making great progress in the activity program. A large unit of work is being carried on in each room and formed the integrating center for the other school subjects. . . .

The Home Unit was being carried out very extensively by Sister M. Josita at Penasco. Her aims were as follows: (1) To lead children to realize how closely school and home are related; (2) To guide the children in the construction of a house; (3) To teach a fundamental English vocabulary; (4) To instill in children a love for an orderly home by creating a home-like atmosphere in school; (5) To make the home life of the children happier. The possible outcomes of this unit were set up as: habits of courtesy, orderliness, and good workmanship. The intellectual gains were those that come from the challenging problem solving. Incidental arithmetic was provided for in direct association in counting adobes and in measuring for furniture. Techniques of coordination were improved by such activities as: mixing mud, laying adobes, plastering, painting, sewing, hammering nails, sawing, cutting, pasting, and serving tables. Throughout this entire unit the children's ideas were enriched by related activities in the form of stories, experience charts, poems, songs, a daily newspaper, booklets, posters, and

⁵ Sanchez, op. cit., p. 78.

related seat work. Excursions were taken to a home under construction, and to the mountains to select vigas for the roof of the house. After marking the trees the children composed a letter to the forest ranger asking permission to cut those trees.

When the home furnishings were complete, home activities were dramatized. The children set the table, served, washed dishes, made a bed, cooked, washed and ironed doll clothes, swept and dusted, etc. This unit culminated in a birthday party. The children brought the ingredients for ice cream. The older children made a birthday cake. Most of the children had never tasted ice cream and as a consequence this healthful food was introduced into their diet. This short resume will show the many possibilities of a home unit for teaching all the virtues and practices of daily Catholic living as well as all the subject matter for the first grade level.

One of the other very fine units that is in progress in New Mexico is the Wool Unit. The children in the first and second grade under the direction of Sister Sienna of the Santa Cruz school are carrying on this activity. Every day from three to four o'clock the children are engaged in this work. At the beginning of the activity period a bulletin is displayed on which the children's names and duties are written. In a few seconds the classroom is transformed into a wool and yarn store where the children purchase the materials which they need for the afternoon's work. Everyone shares in the arithmetic that is involved in this buying and selling. The cashier performs all the operations aloud so that all the children can hear and profit by the arithmetic that is being done. The raw wool is weighed and yarn is sold by the yard. After the materials are in readiness the work begins. Some children wash the wool, others card it and still others spin and weave. The weaving projects are both of an individual and group nature. Berets and dolls' sweaters were made by the group working together.

The children dye all the yarn. Much elementary science work characterizes their experimentation with vegetable dyes of all kinds. At intervals

during the work period the children sing related songs. . . . A daily newspaper, charts, and diary records are kept of the progress of the unit. The whole process of wool working is made up into cooperative story form. Each child made a wool booklet telling the story of wool and illustrating it with pictures and drawings. The children collected and studied pictures of wool manufacture from which they drew free-hand their movie, called: "Wool to Cloth."

. . . An activity program where the physical activity of the children becomes an end in itself is likely to be a vapid, unorganized series of doings resulting in little worthwhile learnings and dissatisfaction and poor study habits on the part of the children. The activity program, when well organized, becomes the most powerful means of worthwhile and integrated learnings.⁶

It was while this latter unit was in progress that Mr. McKay, rural supervisor, visited the Santa Cruz school. In an address to the high school assembly, Mr. McKay described his emotional response when he came into the school as a "hurty feeling, a feeling I get when I see anything beautiful or when I am deeply moved." He commented especially on the attitude of pupils toward their teachers.

Some time later, after Mrs. Mary Watson visited the school she wrote to Sister Seraphine, the principal:

The very atmosphere radiates a calmness that is an outgrowth of true Christian leadership. May you and your staff serve the valley for many years to come.⁷

⁶ Contacts, "Activity Program," 2:16, February, 1934.

⁷ Letter from Mrs. Watson to Sister Seraphine, Dated May 6, 1934.

During the work period the children were told
songs. . . . A daily newspaper, stories, and
records are kept of the progress of the work. The
whole process of wool working is made of little
cooperative story form. Each child has a wool
basket telling the story of wool and illustrating
it with pictures and drawings. The children
collected and studied pictures of wool manufacture
from which they drew free-hand their own, called
"Wool to Cloth."

. . . . An activity program where the children
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as a "berry feeling, a feeling I get when I see anything
beautiful or when I am deeply moved." He commented especially
on the attitude of pupils toward their teachers.
Some time later, after Mr. McKay's return, the
school was visited by Sister Bergquist, the principal.
The very atmosphere radiates a calmness that is an
outgrowth of true Christian leadership. May you and
your staff serve the valley for many years to come.

6 Enclosed, "Activity Program" with, McKay, Mrs.

7 Letter from Mrs. McKay to Sister Bergquist

Dated May 6, 1934.

The fact that children came into each of the northern schools overage and unable to speak English testified to either the incompetence or neglect of teachers in the district schools. Controversies have waxed hot over the language issue in New Mexico. Even the most ardent advocates for preparation of teachers to use both languages interchangeably, however, admit the necessity for teaching children English before speech patterns become inflexible. As has been said, the Sisters generally came to their work in New Mexico not prepared to teach Spanish, but their Superiors had reasons for permitting that arrangement. One Sister, whose work has been much lauded by school officials, is authority for the statement that had she known Spanish it would have been easier for her, assuredly, for she would have resorted to the Spanish to explain certain initial difficulties. However, ease was not her objective, but to teach children English more effectively than they had been taught before.

Had there been Spanish readers for the children, they might have learned to get the thought from the printed page and received some training in reading. Since they had none the Sisters felt it to be their duty to use the direct method and teach them to read in the only books available, English readers. The children slowly but surely mastered a working vocabulary fundamental to the reading procedure. It

has also been noted that Spanish children who started in the primary grades with the Sisters have very little accent in their speech when they finish school.

Perhaps the most disturbing element in the language difficulty is faced in the high school. Because pupils have not learned to read English with facility in the district grade schools they are handicapped from the start. This may be due to the short term of district grade schools, but it makes for heavy elimination and retardation in the upper groups. Elementary schools in Penasco and Santa Cruz are connected with high schools and must have nine-month school terms. A preparation of seventy-two months has considerable advantage over the rural pupil coming in handicapped with a preparation of but from fifty-six to sixty-four months.

Of late years Penasco and Santa Cruz have added vocational courses to the curriculum, but up to the present time limitation of funds has militated against securing optimum results. Agriculture is now a part of the Penasco course, designed to prepare boys to improve the economic status of their localities. A three-year homemaking course for all girls provides ample opportunity for experiences in that field.

Mrs. Adelina Otero Warren, well qualified to speak for her people, advocated a complete revision of curriculum for the New Mexico rural schools. She wrote in the Survey:

has also been noted that the teacher's role is to guide the
primary grades with the teacher's own language and to help them
their speech when they are in the process of learning.
perhaps the most significant element in the language
situation is that the child's language is not only
not learned in the classroom but is also not
grade schools but in the home and in the community.
be due to the above-mentioned factors and to the
taken for better educational and psychological reasons.
groups. Elementary schools in the United States are
connected with the child's life and with the child's
terms. A preparation for the child's life and for the
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elementary schools are not only for the child's life
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results. Elementary schools are not only for the child's life
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child's life and for the child's life.
this provides for the child's life and for the child's life.
field.

Mr. [Name] [Address] [City] [State] [Zip]
for the [Name] [Address] [City] [State] [Zip]
for the [Name] [Address] [City] [State] [Zip]

While I recognize the wonderfully organized system of education in the United States, might it not be beneficial to modify requirements and curricula in New Mexico in another way? If we could, for example, include in the rural curricula the old arts, such as dyeing, blanket weaving, tin work, needle work, and carving for credit, employing experts in these lines from the community, we would perpetuate something of value.

Ours is a simple people. We have no complexities to harass us. We live--we love--we die. We laugh in joy and weep in sadness. We are superficial? Indeed no! . . . Is it not a question of our gradual merging of our assimilation, but at the same time of conserving our distinctive contribution through the preservation of customs, traditions, arts, and crafts of the Southwest?⁸

Mrs. Warren was instrumental in getting such a program initiated in the Santa Cruz school and, consequently, in helping many boys and girls to complete their high school education. A number of graduates from that school are now instructors in the arts and crafts in other schools.

One of the most invaluable and important means for the enrichment of the curriculum is the use of environment. The Sisters considered it one of their first duties to familiarize themselves with the attitudes, social institutions, and, in fact, with all the sources which the environment afforded, the better to guide pupils to an enlightened understanding of social science concepts. They found most of the children to be unmindful of the beauty that literally

⁸ Adelina Otero Warren, "My People," Survey, 66:149-57, May, 1931.

surrounded them. The young people were seemingly unaware of the duties incumbent upon people living in a national forest, and there was little worry about such malpractices as overgrazing, improper irrigation usage, forest fires caused by carelessness, and many other doubtful practices. Forest rangers were asked to spotlight their activities in various types of programs in both grade and high schools. Their educational policies and programs were made to tie in with units in biology, English, and every other possible subject. The school became a community center where educational movies were shown and to which parents were invited frequently. Information was thus disseminated that has resulted in modifying some bad methods of timber cutting and improper grazing techniques. It assuredly has both instructed the people and brought about a friendlier feeling between forest officials and the people.

Miss Ann Raymond of the Soil Conservation Service enlisted the enthusiasm of pupils and teachers in the Santa Cruz school in a study of the Santa Cruz Dam project. So well did the study carry over into the homes that many improvements have resulted in the economic life of that community.

A fine spirit of generosity has always characterized the intercourse of the Sisters with other teachers in their localities. Whatever projects they worked out successfully

surrounded them. The young people were feeling the
of the better known and more active in a national
forest, and there was little more about such organizations
an organization, however, through which, forest fires
caused by carelessness, and many other forest problems.
Forest rangers were asked to highlight their activities in
various types of programs in both great and high schools.
Their educational policies and programs were also to be
in which units in biology, English, and every other possible
subject. The school became a center of forest interest about which
occasional movies were shown and in which reports were made
frequently. Information was being disseminated that the
resulted in modifying aims and methods of forest education and
improved forest techniques. It was necessary for both teachers
the people and brought about a firmer feeling between
forest officials and the people.

When the Director of the Soil Conservation Service
called the attention of people and teachers in the States
that school is a study of the State Game Law Project. He
will find the study every year and the more that they
improvements have resulted in the economic life of the
community.

A fine spirit of generosity has always characterized
the instructors of the State with whom teachers in their
localities. Whatever projects they worked out cooperatively

they were eager to share with those in less fortunate circumstances. Other district teachers often say that the Sisters are never too busy to give friendly assistance, and all the Sisters ask is that such information be passed on in the more distant schools. Loans or gifts of instructional materials, demonstrations of technique, assistance in constructing useful and necessary articles for the classroom--all these and many more helps have contributed in a degree to the improvement of less favored and more isolated schools. Both the Ranchos de Taos and Penasco schools were chosen as "key" schools in Taos County, as was the San Juan school in Rio Arriba County. Members of the faculty in the "key" schools were named leaders of discussion groups to aid in the state program for the improvement of instruction.

In April, 1932, at one of the teachers' meetings at Santa Cruz, the guests were the County Superintendent and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. So well impressed was the latter with the excellent demonstration given by the primary teacher that a suggestion was to make the Santa Cruz school the training center for teachers in the northern part of the state, as San Jose Training School was for the southern part. That plan was not carried out, however, as the training school was later established at Nambe under the very able supervision of Mrs. Mary Watson.

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cumstances. Other distant teachers often say that the
masters are never too busy to give friendly assistance, and
all the masters are in such such information be passed on to
the more distant schools. Many on lists of correspondence
materials, demonstration of technique, and plans for a
strategic meeting and necessary studies for the students.
All these and many more things have contributed to a better
to the improvement of their service and the students' progress.
Both the teacher as well as the students' progress is
"Key" schools in their country, as was the case with the
Hispanic country. Members of the faculty in the "Key"
schools were given leaders of discussion groups to discuss
the state program for the improvement of instruction.
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Santa Cruz, the guests were the County Superintendent and
the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. So well
impressed was the latter with the excellent demonstration
given by the primary teacher that a suggestion was to send
the Santa Cruz school as training center for teachers in
the northern part of the state, as the Jose Trinidad school
was for the southern part. That plan was not carried out,
however, as the training school was later established at
Hondo under the very able supervision of Mrs. Mary Brown.

The school at Belen did not present the same problems as the schools farther up in the mountains. Much was done, however, to bring that school up to its present condition of success.

The Sisters early began work on another social problem. If the children of a home were to be afforded the best opportunities to understand the problems of any school program, those children must meet at home the responsibilities involved in that program. To understand fully health objectives taught in the school, there must be home projects worked out involving both health and sanitation, terms frequently not included in the vocabulary of the people living in Dixon, Penasco, and Santa Cruz.

Hence, a very wide gap between the home, school, and community had to be bridged in the first three centers in which the Sisters taught. These Religious began their work in the various areas fully appreciating the principle that the right kind of cooperation is evolutionary and cumulative and that one must have great patience. One of the first means the Sisters used to win the confidence of a people loath to accept outsiders was to care for their little children. Among each group of Sisters was one trained and experienced in practical nursing. Mothers, fathers, and little children soon found their way to the convent to be benefited by the ministrations of the Hermana. Food had

The school at Union did not regard the same program as the schools farther up in the mountains. There was some, however, to bring that school up to its present condition of success.

The Sisters early began work on another school program. If the children of a home were to be elevated the best opportunities to understand the program of the school and learn, those children must meet at home and responsibilities involved in that program. To understand fully what was being taught in the school, there must be some program worked out involving both health and education. This responsibility was included in the responsibility of the people living in Union, Tennessee, and Santa Cruz.

There was a very wide gap between the home, school, and community had to be bridged in the first three centers in which the Sisters taught. These Sisters began their work in the various areas fully appreciating the principle that the right kind of cooperation is revolutionary and creative and that one must have great patience. One of the first means the Sisters used to win the confidence of a people was to accept outsiders and to come for them. Little by little, among each group of Sisters and one trained and experienced in practical nursing. Mother, Father, and little children soon found their way to the center to be benefited by the ministrations of the Sisters. Food had

often to be prepared for the sick and carried to their homes. Where a doctor was twenty-five miles distant in the mountains and a hospital about seventy, such help was invaluable. In every way possible the Sisters attempted to overcome the double difficulty of ignorance and sensitiveness of the people. The order of convent life often ^{gave} way in the face of the needs of poor and sick. Driving a car in all weather over rough mountain roads was difficult and dangerous, yet the Sisters often had to do it.

Numberless were the difficulties to be overcome in providing for health and sanitation. Few homes had provisions for sewage disposal. Because of the characteristics of the people, very graphic and often extrinsic methods of approach to the problem of health education in school had to be made. Each problem was studied carefully, and there was always an attempt to appeal at the highest possible level. Some of the approaches with the children were through drills, songs, and competitive methods.

Before the Mother General of Grand Rapids permitted the Sisters to take up residence at Penasco, provisions were made for pure water and wholesome milk. There were cows in the vicinity, but for lack of adequate feeding and care there was little milk and that was often contaminated because of the inroads of typhoid in the homes. For every purpose water was often taken from the open ditches.

Drilling a well deep enough to tap a spring might have seemed useless to the natives, but that difficulty was overcome when the children at school drank the lovely cold water from the convent well and were warned against the dangers of the ditch water.

To solve the problem of securing good milk, the Sisters purchased Jersey cows from Mora, where good cattle could be bought. The milk and butter sent out from the convent attracted the natives, and little Jersey heifers were soon in great demand. Before long cattle improvement, the growing of many vegetables, and the making of bread became a necessity with the farmers when their children were daily rewarded by the Sisters if they could report that they drank their milk, ate their vegetables and cereals, and ate good bread.

Faulty diet caused much of the prevalent impetigo and the other deficiency diseases among the people. First the Sisters secured donations from their friends to purchase ammoniated mercury to dispense to children. Proper direction in its use and special care of the body did much to cut down appreciably the number of victims. Understanding full well the futility of merely caring for the people without basic education in health practices, the principal of the Penasco school asked the Mother General to supply a domestic science instructor free, as well as the equipment for teaching and

materials with which to work.

The request was granted, and two rooms formerly used as a dwelling were converted into a home-making laboratory. Through food units the girls were given as much practice as possible in the preparation of well-balanced meals after they were instructed in the elementary principles of cooking. All the girls took lively interest when they were obliged to prepare three times at home the meals planned and cooked in class before credit was given for the unit in domestic science. When canning season came the second year the department was equipped with an excellent pressure cooker. So interested were the girls with their canning that they invited their mothers to demonstrations in the home-economics classes. Today there is scarcely a home which is not equipped with canning facilities for preserving those desirable elements of diet, particularly vegetables, which formerly were unknown.

Excessive absence marked the attendance record at Santa Cruz the first year the Sisters taught in that school. Upon investigation they discovered malaria fever was taking the heavy toll. Almost at once the county and state health officials were contacted. At the request of the Sisters each child was tested for malaria, and where positive reactions were evident homes were investigated and conditions corrected. A unit in biology was initiated for the study of

materials which to work.

The request was granted, and two more families were
as a dwelling were converted into a three-story building.
Through food with the girls were given as much practice as
possible in the preparation of self-sufficient meals after
they were instructed in the elementary principles of cooking.
All the girls took lively interest when they were called to
prepare their meals at home the meals prepared and cooked in
of the before trials was given for the unit in domestic
science. When evening sessions were the second year the
department was equipped with an excellent kitchen system.
So interested were the girls with their dancing that they
invited their mothers to demonstrations in the home-ecomen-
in classes. Today there is scarcely a home which is not
equipped with amazing facilities for preserving those essen-
tial elements of diet, particularly vegetables, which
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Extensive agencies marked the attendance record as
Baker Creek the first year the history taught in that school.
Upon investigation they discovered major's farm was facing
the heavy toll. Almost at once the county and state health
officials were contacted. At the request of the health
when child was tested for malaria, and where positive find-
ings were evident homes were investigated and notified
corrected. A unit in biology was initiated for the study of

the disease and the means to prevent it. Through public health funds that the Sisters sought guppies were purchased and planted in the irrigation ditches to eliminate the malaria mosquito. Windows and doors were screened, and the whole campaign was so effective that never since has the community been so scourged with that dread disease.

Since 1934 courses in Red Cross first aid procedure have been taught in Penasco and Santa Cruz. Penasco schools were among the first in Taos County to adopt the hot lunch program. The parents, at the insistence of the Sisters, set up a permanent committee to inaugurate and maintain the program. Handicapped for lack of funds, they nevertheless got under way early in 1939. The first year approximately one-third of the children were taken care of; the second year over two-thirds. Now in its third year, practically every child in the school is given one substantial meal each day. The record of this school is practically that of every school following out the program efficiently--increased weight and vitality, less susceptibility to colds and other respiratory diseases, better work, especially in the late afternoon, and a tendency to appreciate a variety of foods hitherto not in their diet.

It was particularly noted of the Spanish-American children that their play was extremely individualistic. The first baseball game seen in Dixon was coached and umpired by

a Dominican Sister. Since that time recreational programs have expanded under the direction of trained leaders. Equipment has always been somewhat scanty, but the same care and ingenuity that brought about accumulation of school supplies and equipment served also to increase facilities for play and recreational activities.

The native peoples have come to regard highly the numerous reforms in hygienic living initiated by the Sisters. Gradually the one-room adobe house is giving way to larger and better equipped homes, infant mortality rate is lowered, and more satisfactory adjustments are made to make the home life attractive.

The subject of enrollments has been discussed elsewhere. It will suffice here to give a concise picture over a period of years. In each case the number of children in the school the year prior to the Sisters' taking charge is given with the exception of Ranchos de Taos, which operated the first year as a parochial school; only the second year was its status changed at the request of the Taos County School Board. Dixon, sixty; Penasco, sixty-nine; Santa Cruz, one hundred sixty; San Juan, sixty-five; Belen, two hundred. The year the Sisters took over the enrollments were: Dixon, one hundred forty; Penasco, two hundred fifteen; Santa Cruz, one hundred eighty-five; San Juan, ninety-eight; Belen, two hundred ten; Ranchos de Taos, one hundred twenty. A combined

a Hamilton Street. Other than the few national banks
have expanded under the direction of Federal Reserve. Banks
want the right hand towards equity, but the main case of
inactivity that people have accumulated as of school children
and employees moved also to business facilities for this
and vocational activities.

The native people have come to regard highly the
numerous returns in business living facilities by the business
Gradually the one-room school house is being way to larger
and better equipped houses, and the number of schools is increasing
and more satisfactory adjustments are made to meet the same
life activities.

The subject of enrollment has been discussed already
where. It will suffice here to give a general picture over
a period of years. In 1900 the number of children in
the school the year before the census, under census
given with the exception of negroes in Texas, which provided
the first year as a vocational school; only the second year
was its status changed to the extent of the year 1900.
School Board, 1890, 1895, 1900, 1905, 1910, 1915, 1920, 1925,
one hundred sixty; 1930, 1935, 1940, 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960,
The year the district took over the enrollment was: 1890,
one hundred forty; 1900, 1905, 1910, 1915, 1920, 1925, 1930,
and hundred eighty-five; 1935, 1940, 1945, 1950, 1955, 1960,
hundred year; 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000.

enrollment of over seventeen hundred children in all schools conducted by the Dominican Sisters was recorded in May, 1941.

Penasco and Santa Cruz schools are strategically located to serve a large number of localities, for the high schools are the centers of activity for a large number of districts. Though the Sisters do not find it practicable always to function personally in every service of the school, they have competent secular teachers to represent them. This fact has wide implications. Athletic and recreational programs call for directors, men with wide vision and active minds and bodies. While they are engaged in these activities, they come under the direction of the Sisters in the preparation and development of their programs. Naturally, they become acquainted with better methods and techniques, and with a reliable philosophy of education. They in turn, being absorbed into larger systems, will be in a position to contribute much of value to larger endeavors.

Upon her being asked to evaluate the services rendered by the Dominican Sisters to education in New Mexico, Mrs. Adelina Otero Warren wrote the following:

As Santa Fe County School Superintendent, to my thinking the public school in Santa Cruz was not at all satisfactory. I had definite ideas, theories perhaps, of what rural education should be. One of the most important of these was that the school must serve as the leading agency in community life. I looked into the work of the past in the public school of Santa Cruz. What had the the school done for the

enrollment of over seven hundred children in all schools conducted by the Dominican Sisters was reported in May, 1911. The Sisters and Santa Cruz schools are also interested in having to serve a large number of localities. For the Sisters are the centers of activity for a large number of districts. Through the Sisters is not found in practically always to function personally in every corner of the school. They have competent regular teachers to represent them. This fact has wide implications. Athletic and recreational programs call for attention, men with vision and active minds and bodies. While they are engaged in these activities they come under the direction of the Sisters in the organization and development of their programs. Naturally, they become acquainted with better methods and techniques, and with a reliable philosophy of education. They in turn, being absorbed into larger systems, will be in a position to contribute much of value to larger endeavors. Upon her being asked to evaluate the services rendered by the Dominican Sisters to education in New Mexico, Mrs. Adelina Gordo wrote the following:

An Santa Cruz School Superintendent, in thinking the public school in Santa Cruz was not all satisfactory. I had definite ideas, however, of what rural education should be. One of the most important of these was that the school should serve as the leading agency in community life. I looked into the work of the Sisters in the public schools of Santa Cruz. What was the school doing for the

community? What had the community done for the school? This took the nature of a survey of school attendance, general school activities, and the upkeep of buildings and grounds. I saw a need in Santa Cruz for adapting education to the needs of the people. This program of instruction needed a special leadership, the kind that would provide the "spirit" as well as the training to build up a curriculum indigenous to the community, and make it adaptable to the special situation in Santa Cruz.

I had heard of the splendid work being done by the Dominican Sisters elsewhere in the state. I called on Archbishop Daeger and requested him to secure four Sisters to start work in Santa Cruz. Of course there were many complications. It took me two years of constant urging and planning before my purpose was accomplished.

Finally, in 1928, four Sisters arrived to take charge of the school. Sister Seraphine was named principal, and Sister Sienna took charge of the primary department. They were employed by the Santa Fe County Board of Education. With their coming the community took on a new importance. There was a confidence which the whole village now placed in the teachers. Now there is no question of securing community participation in any worthwhile project. The preparation of materials, and the additional buildings and gymnasium are examples of unity of school and community interests of that special school.

The Sisters' work was from the first marked by efficiency, devotion, sacrifice, great enthusiasm, and the spirit of service in the cause of education. The community at large has greatly benefited as well as the children who came under the care of the Sisters. When the Dominican Sisters arrived in Santa Cruz, I felt that the soul had returned to the community.

The Dominican Order is to be congratulated for seeing the possibilities in Santa Cruz and for leaving two of the Sisters who started the work, namely Sister Seraphine and Sister Sienna, to carry on and complete or reach their objective.

Sincerely, and always with appreciation for what your Sisters have done for my people.⁹

Nina Otero Warren.

Although much has been accomplished on the material side, still the greatest values resulting from the work of the Sisters in Spanish-American communities are immaterial --spiritual. Receptivity to social and economic advancement; the awakening of a desire for better educational advantages for their children; a disposition to adopt more modern conveniences for their homes; the breaking down of superstitious practices and the formulation of loftier concepts of morals and religion; all these accomplishments, and others, have tended to promote among the people a better moral life, a more deeply religious life, a finer culture, a healthier and more satisfying life for individuals and communities. And these are the goals the Sisters aimed to reach when they laid the foundation of a Christian education in New Mexico.

⁹ Letter from Mrs. Warren to the writer, dated March 17, 1942.

Sincerely, and always with appreciation for what you
 Sisters have done for my people.

With warm regards,

Although much has been accomplished on the material
 side, still the greatest values resulting from the work of
 the Sisters in Spanish-American communities are immaterial
 --spiritual. Responsivity to social and economic advance-
 ment; the awakening of a desire for better education;
 advantages for their children; a disposition to adopt some
 modern conveniences for their homes; the breaking down of
 superstitious practices and the formation of better con-
 cepts of morals and religion; all these accomplishments
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 moral life, a more deeply religious life, a finer culture,
 healthier and more satisfying life for individuals and com-
 munities. And these are the goals the Sisters aimed to
 reach when they laid the foundation of a Christian community
 in New Mexico.

Letter from Mrs. Herman to the writer, dated
 March 17, 1942.

CHAPTER V

POSSIBILITIES OF EXTENSION

Basically, a philosophy of education which has so coordinated the efforts of the Dominican Sisters as to bring about the type of worth-while accomplishments as were discussed in Chapter IV is worthy of still wider application. Qualitative rather than quantitative expansion will, however, mark the work of the Sisters in the years ahead. In the light of past experience, there is much yet to be done if all the visions of the pioneers in the work are to be realized. They challenged those who should come after them to carry on in the same spirit as they had done. That challenge can be met successfully rather by concentrating efforts in the communities which already have schools in charge of the Sisters than by taking more schools under their supervision.

The basis for that statement lies in the fact that only one school under Dominican auspices in the State of New Mexico is accounted urban; all the others are in typical mountain villages, some of which until recently were almost completely isolated. Much has been done, and more remains to be accomplished. Penasco is so typical of these villages that when its potentialities are discussed it will be tantamount to a survey of each of the schools, for the same philosophy dominates all. Something of the anticipated

reorganization must follow the plan of Monsignor Luigi Ligutti, outstanding authority on Catholic rural life in America. He says:

Rural leaders and rural teachers owe it to the preservation of society to interest themselves in the social and economic problems of rural life, such as farm tenancy, rural slums, cooperatives, rural child welfare, population trends, rural vocational guidance, rural homemaking crafts, legislation in the interest of the farmer, projects of county, state, and national conservation and planning boards, rural electrification, the project of the ever normal granary, the relation of human-scale technocracy to rural and social economic problems, etc.¹

The schoolhouse, and more especially the rural school, is the symbol of partnership between the people and the state for the training of its citizens. Citizenship, in its fullest sense, connotes the development of the whole man, his spiritual as well as his physical being. A program initiated with the purpose of coping with that duality of nature must be skillfully planned, carefully nurtured, and not unduly rushed to fruition. It has taken many years to bring the people of the various Spanish-American communities to the point where they are willing to investigate and possibly invest in progressive movements such as outlined above. Consequently, it need not be surprising if many more years of difficulties lie ahead and much labor is the cost of fully inducting these people into the best phases of community life.

¹ Luigi Ligutti and John C. Rawe, Rural Roads to Security (The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, Wisconsin: 1940), p. 225.

As has been stated, the high school building in Penasco afforded the first meeting place where community get-togethers were possible. Even the school has outgrown the needs of that community, for such large crowds come to school exercises, movies, parent-teacher meetings, and other gatherings that there is scarcely room to accommodate all of them. That slowly stirring spirit of cooperation admits of many and varied outlets. The outstanding need now is a community center from which all activities may radiate. Patently, that will never be realized except through close cooperation of school and community. Post-war adjustments will more than ever demand a clearing house in even the smallest rural community. Inasmuch as the school must provide the dynamic leadership as it has done in the past, it is logical to expect the community center to function as part of the larger school program. As Monsignor Ligutti further says:

Bearing the burden together, interpreting the problems and meaning of life together, will give the foundation and background of experience necessary in order that human nature may comprehend and appreciate the demand for social virtues, social justice and social charity.²

Santa Cruz is now completing a large auditorium in connection with the rebuilt school. This, too, is in the

² Ligutti, op. cit., p. 224.

has been tested, the high school building in
 Kansas afforded the first modern place where community
 get-togethers were possible. Even the school has outgrown
 the needs of that community, for when large groups come to
 school exercises, parties, parent-teacher meetings, and other
 gatherings that there is scarcely room to accommodate all of
 them. That slowly arising spirit of cooperation exists of
 many and varied outlets. The outstanding need now is a
 community center from which all activities are conducted.
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 cooperation of school and community. Most-well organized
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 smallest rural community. Inasmuch as the school must pro-
 vide the dynamic leadership as it has done in the past, it
 is logical to expect the community center to function as
 part of the larger school program. As Holsinger likens
 further says:

Bearing the burden together, interpreting the pro-
 ject and meaning of life together, will give the
 foundation and background of experience necessary in
 order that human nature may understand and appreciate
 the demand for good will, social justice and
 social charity.²

Since this is now recognized a large addition in
 connection with the public school. This, too, is in the

² Holsinger, op. cit., p. 184.

larger plan there, to use the building as much for community purposes as for the school. The Ranchos de Taos program has from the beginning aimed at building spiritual and community solidarity. Expansion in that community can mean only deepening of the aspiration of Sisters and pastor to make that solidarity total, to touch the lives of every man, woman, and child in the villages around them.

Curricular revision in cultural and technical subjects to make for a life of high cultural and intellectual achievement on the land is another way to attain the objectives set by the Sisters. Most of the boys and girls in the rural districts must be prepared to live in their own or similar localities. The old ideas that such a life is onerous and beneath the dignity of the professions or life in the city, no matter how miserable it may be, must be stamped out in the schools by teachers who rightly understand the place of the farmer in American life.

The six objectives of a program set up in Granger, Iowa, for a new type of school are worthy of consideration in planning a long range program for the New Mexico schools.

1. Religious motivation for this new living.
2. Problems of ownership, liberty, democracy.
3. Local natural social grouping for economic needs (cooperatives).
4. Local natural social grouping for problems of health, education, recreation, etc.
5. Scientific techniques in soils, crops, animals, adapted to the family farm.

larger than there, to use the building as much for the
purpose as for the school. The school building is
from the beginning aimed at building character and
solidarity. Expansion in that community can come only
out of the realization of the value of the school
solidarity itself, to touch the lives of every child, woman,
and child in the village itself.

Curriculum revision in schools is essential to
help to make for a life of high character and high
achievement in the life of the individual and the
life of the nation. Most of the work of the school
must be done in the life of the individual and the
life of the nation. The old idea that the school is
one and the same in the life of the individual and the
life of the nation is wrong. The school is one and the
same in the life of the individual and the life of the
nation. The school is one and the same in the life of
the individual and the life of the nation. The school is
one and the same in the life of the individual and the
life of the nation. The school is one and the same in
the life of the individual and the life of the nation.

The six objectives of a program set up in 1930,
for a new type of school are worthy of consideration
in planning a long range program for the new school.

1. National education for the new life.
2. Training of character, intellect, and body.
3. Local national social progress for the new life.
4. Local national social progress for the new life.
5. National education for the new life.
6. National education for the new life.

6. Scientific techniques of engineering, electricity, and in machines adapted to the family farm.

The Thirtieth Yearbook,³ published in 1931, presents some statistics that should make New Mexico rural teachers pause for thought. Not only did figures prove the general inferiority of the country child in abilities as compared with the urban child as deduced from testing programs, but the health of the former could not compare with the latter. Findings indicated that even in personal health, where the country child who lives close to nature and near the sources of the most wholesome foods would be expected to hold an advantage, the examinations show the superiority of the city child in diet, muscular development, and health habits.

The Reverend John LaFarge, S.J., speaking of the general welfare of rural people, has this to say:

The rural life of the day, though faced with new opportunities, is likewise faced with new dangers. Country life of itself confers no immunity from either physical or spiritual disease. A medical friend of mine found less freedom from tuberculosis and other degenerative diseases among people living in the high plateaus of New Mexico than he did in the congested tenements of New York's East Side. Crime, dishonesty can find their way into the remotest hamlets of mountain or prairie. . . .⁴

³ National Society for the Study of Education, Thirtieth Yearbook, Part I, "The Status of Rural Education." (Bloomington, Illinois: The Public School Publishing Company, 1931), Chapter II.

⁴ John LaFarge, The Church and Rural Welfare, National Catholic Rural Life Conference Pamphlet, (St. Paul, 1935).

6. Scientific knowledge of environment, statistics, and in sciences applied to the family form.

The *Twentieth Century*,² published in 1921, presents

some statistics that should make new Mexico rural leaders pause for thought. Not only do figures prove the general inferiority of the country child in relation to average child the urban child is detached from family group, but the health of the former would not compare with the latter. Findings indicated that even in personal health, where the country child and lives close to nature and has the benefit of the most wholesome foods would be expected to hold an advantage, the examination shows the superiority of the urban child in diet, muscular development, and mental health.

The Reverend John LaSalle, S.J., speaking of the general welfare of rural people, has this to say:

The rural life of the day, though more comfortable and opportunities, is likewise loaded with new dangers. Country life of itself entails no immunity from either physical or spiritual disease. A medical friend of mine found less freedom from tuberculosis and other degenerative diseases among people living in the high plateau of New Mexico than he did in the congested communities of New York's East Side. Other, of course, ... see their way into the modern machine of machine or similar. . . .

² National Society for the Study of Education, *Twentieth Century*, Part I, "The Status of Rural Education," (Washington, D.C.: The Public School Publishing Company, 1921), Chapter II.

³ John LaSalle, *The Church and Rural Welfare*, National Catholic Rural Life Conference pamphlet, (St. Paul, 1922).

So many vital issues are at stake that it behooves officials to look to the training for teachers destined for rural education. Proper training for teachers in New Mexico rural schools is of tremendous importance. As Sanchez points out:

The education of the New Mexican must be realistic, one that is meaningful and interesting to him in terms that are adjusted to his total situation. That education must take into account his peculiar cultural and economic position. It must be adapted to that position and must be identified with the setting within which it operates. The environment demands that the forces of education assume direct responsibility in the crisis faced by the New Mexican. That crisis is one in which reading and writing must not be dissociated from poor health, from civic ineffectualness, from insufficient farming, and from the other defects which are both the cause and effect in the New Mexican's backwardness. That is to say that education must respond to the needs of the New Mexican through action programs designed to remedy the existing deficiencies in his total social and economic life and those programs must be adapted to his customs and traditions, to his language and historical background.⁵

An agricultural program in the Penasco High School, designed not only to meet the need for curriculum revision but also to draw the community farmers into its larger sphere, is even now being set up with the approval of the State Department of Education. Services of the various federal agencies have been utilized, and will extend to that point only where the project is self-sustaining, beyond which no

⁵ George I. Sanchez, Forgotten People, (Albuquerque, New Mexico: The University of New Mexico Press, 1940), p. 90.

endeavor should seek outside help or subsidy. It will be the duty of the school to educate future farmers in methods best adapted to the soil and general terrain of the areas in which the pupils live. Practices which build up desirable attitudes maturing in the larger program of the high school will be part of the elementary curriculum. Nature study will open up the eyes of the pupils of the lower grades to the beauties of their environment that should and can be preserved. Conservation of land and water are terms that touch the lives of even very small children in a country where every drop of water and every hundredth inch of top soil are necessary to their very livelihood.

The specialized educational enterprises for rural youth as part of the 4-H Club must be made to function more dynamically. Those clubs already functioning, helping to foster and develop desirable ideals and standards for farming, homemaking, community life, and citizenship, shall not be neglected by boys and girls trained in cooperative action and through associated efforts. Such values will not be lost sight of in the larger and more comprehensive plan for the school-community good.

No matter what shall be done in the school to settle the land problem, little if anything can be accomplished until health and civic life be improved. The Taos County Project, operating under funds received from the Carnegie

endemic should be... the only of the... first... which the... evidence... will be... open up... function of... nerves... the liver... every drop of... necessary...

The... young... dynamism... lower and... ing, however... be neglected... and through... lost sight of... the... and...

He... the... small... Project...

Foundation and sponsored by the University of New Mexico, has set up various excellent goals for accomplishment within the county of Taos. One of these, the Health Cooperative, can best function directly in connection with the Penasco High School. Though many communities have bid for the proposed clinic to be set up under the auspices of the Taos Project, nearly all concede now that Penasco has the most valid claim for its erection in that locality. It is almost a certainty that there will be no other high school in the southern part of the county but the one in Penasco, and it will continue to draw into its school population boys and girls from nine or more school districts.

Present plans for this phase of cooperation between community and school include the training of every high school girl in the routine practices and duties of the clinic by actually serving some time with the nurse at the health center. Each girl who has graduated in the past has had certain advantages, it is true, but not under such ideal conditions as will be available in a modern, up-to-date clinic like the one proposed. A community health-consciousness will, it is hoped, be brought to full fruition under such a program.

Recreational activities, sponsored by the school and under the supervision of a trained leader, preferably a member of the faculty, is part of the total picture, presumably.

Even in the most isolated communities there has crept in an unhealthy craving for artificial amusement. The curse of inactivity, the desire to be entertained rather than to furnish their own entertainment, has become a major problem which can be adequately solved only through able direction in a community center program.

Uncertainty marks the future of the hot school lunch. Possibly in all the schools an effort will be made to continue giving children the much-needed noon day lunch even if the Surplus Commodities Administration ceases to function. Parent-Teacher organizations, growing stronger each year, are being more and more directed to interest themselves in the welfare of all children in the schools. If the WPA help now assigned is withdrawn, it is possible that the nutrition features of the lunch program will be handled by the home-making classes, with voluntary help to supplement the work.

The Boy Scouts of America have been organized in each of the Dominican Sisters schools; their programs tie in with church activities as well as civic and school. Parents begin to recognize and understand more thoroughly the values inherent in that organization and will, no doubt, be instrumental in making the organization a more vital part of community activities. Certainly, future citizens who are Boy Scouts will be better equipped physically, mentally, and morally to contribute to better homes, better communities,

Even in the most isolated communities there is an
unusually craving for artificial amusement. The desire to
investigate, the desire to be entertained rather than to
furnish their own entertainment, has become a major factor
which can be adequately solved only through public recreation
in a community center program.

Uncertainty marks the future of the new school lunch
possibly in all the schools an effort will be made to ex-
tend giving children the much-needed good day lunch even if
the surplus commodities administration seems to question
parent-teacher organizations, giving stronger action, and
are being more and more attached to interest committees in
the welfare of all children in the schools. It has been
now assigned to withdrawn, it is possible that the restriction
features of the lunch program will be handled by the local
meeting classes, with voluntary help to supplement the work.
The Boy Scouts of America have been organized in each
of the American States schools; their programs are in line
through activities as well as civic and social. Parents
begin to recognize and understand more thoroughly the value
inherent in that organization, and will, no doubt, be making
greater its making the organization a more vital part of
community activities. Certainly, future efforts will be
Boy Scouts will be better equipped physically, mentally, and
morally to contribute to better homes, better communities.

and a better nation.

Growing out of the closer school-community relationship there will eventually evolve a program of adult education. From that type of study of common problems unquestionably some attempt will be made to study the cooperatives in other fields than health. Somewhere in the future it is hoped there will evolve a type of cooperative such as Leo XIII emphasized in Rerum Novarum, his encyclical on labor. "The experience of his own weakness urges man to call in help from without. We read in Holy Writ: A brother that is helped by his brother is like a strong city. (Prov. IV, III, 19). And just as this natural propensity leads men to unite in civil society, it induces them also to enter with their fellowmen into various other societies."⁶

Whether the pupils are housed in a magnificent structure or an adobe building, whether the equipment is excellent or poor, it is still the teacher that makes the school. Education is a human process---something that happens as a result of impact of personality on personality. There are very decided limits to its mechanization. The one sure way to effect an educational reform is to convince teachers of its accomplishment. That has not, nor will it be, difficult

⁶ Rerum Novarum, N.C.W.C. Edition, 1931, p. 146.

and a better nation.

Division out of the class school-educationally

with them will eventually evolve a program which

plan. The same type of study of some of the

stomachly some things will be made to study

in other fields from health. Therefore in

posed name will evolve a type of cooperation

the 1911 experiment is being known, his

labor. The experience of the two

will be held in mind. The need is

that he be held by his program is like a

IV, III, 1911, and that the

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for Sisters who have given their very lives to such a vocation. The Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan, have the example of members of their own Community who commenced the work, set the goals, and showed the way to success through self-sacrifice and prayer.

for Sisters who have given their lives to such a
 vocation. The Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan,
 have the example of their own Community and
 command the work, and show the way to
 success through self-sacrifice and prayer.

TABLE I

GROWTH OF NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS UNDER DOMINICAN SISTERS
OF GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

School	Opened	Initial Enrollment	Teachers	1941 Enrollment	1941 Teachers
Dixon	1925	60	3	150	4
Penasco	1926	69	4	412	13
Santa Cruz	1928	160	4	398	12
San Juan	1929	65	2	217	7
Belen	1933	200	4	300	9
Ranchos de Taos	1936	120	5	240	7

NORTH CAROLINA
 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY
 DIVISION OF HORTICULTURE
 REPORT OF THE
 COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE
 FOR THE YEAR 1911

NAME	ADDRESS	CITY	COUNTY	SCHOOL
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000
BAXTER	1000	1000	1000	1000

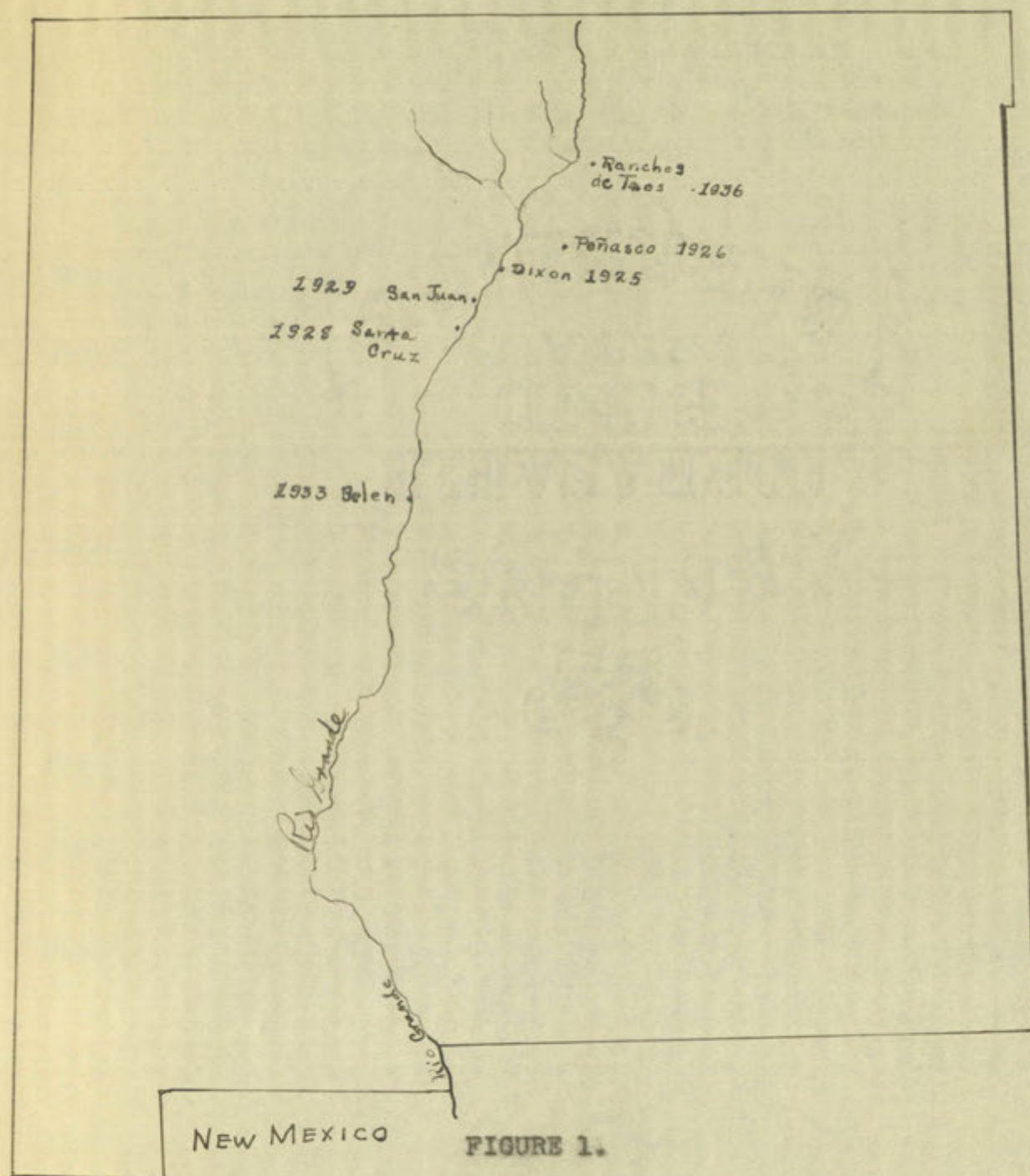
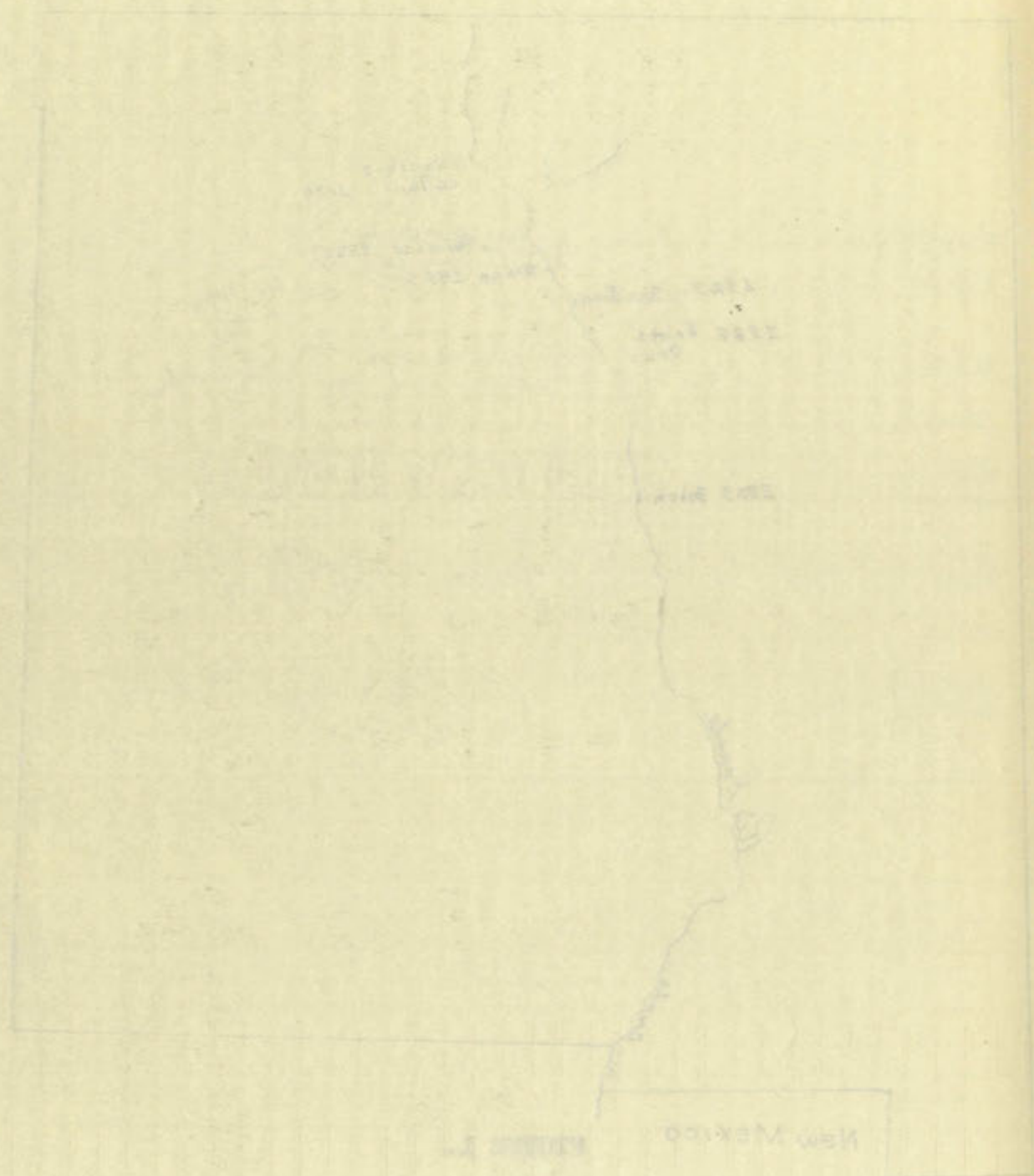


FIGURE 1.

NEW MEXICO SCHOOLS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
DOMINICAN SISTERS OF GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.



THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO
COUNTY OF SANTA FE

1900

1901

1902

1903

1904

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1905

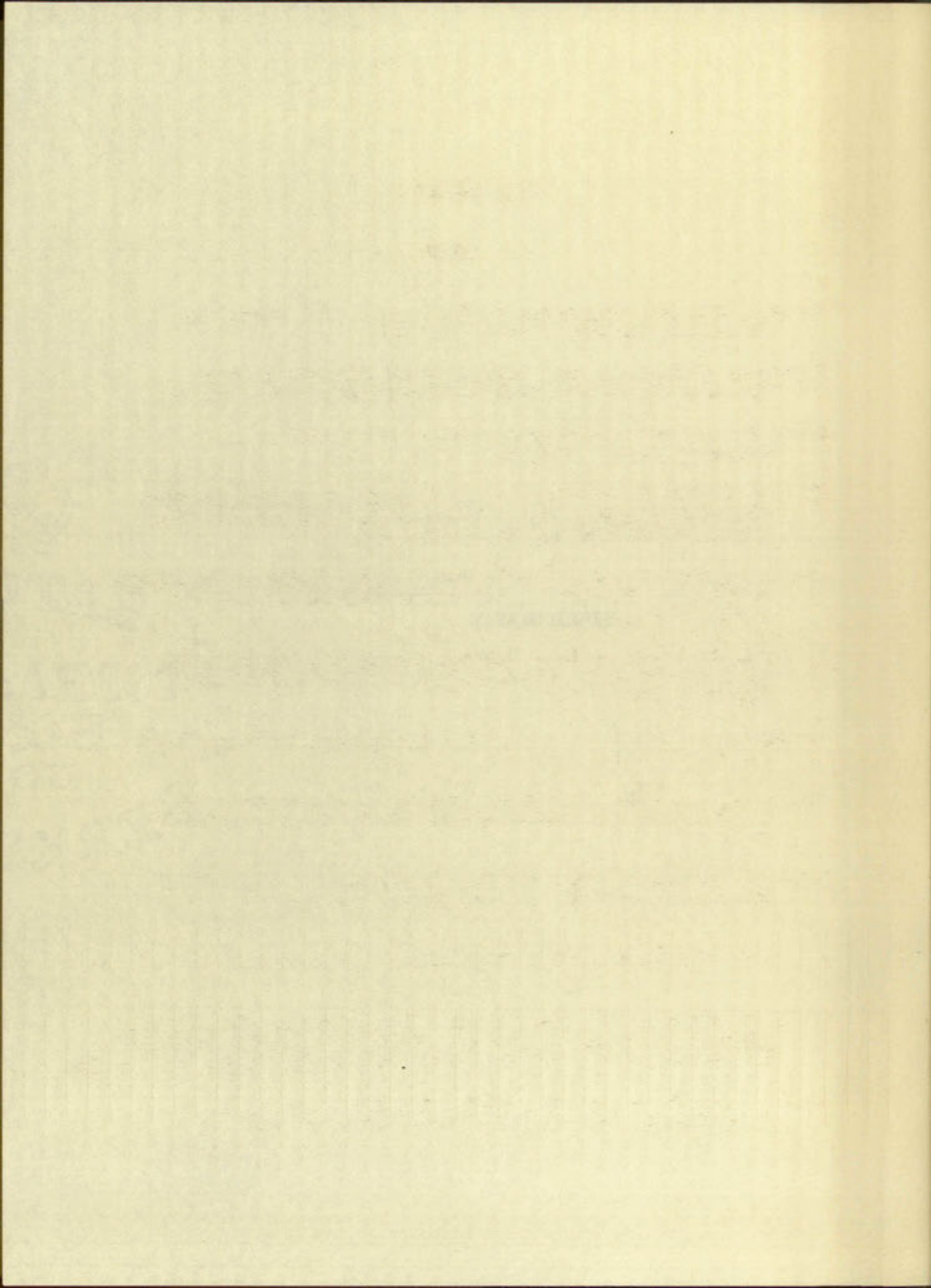
1906

1907

1908

1909

1910



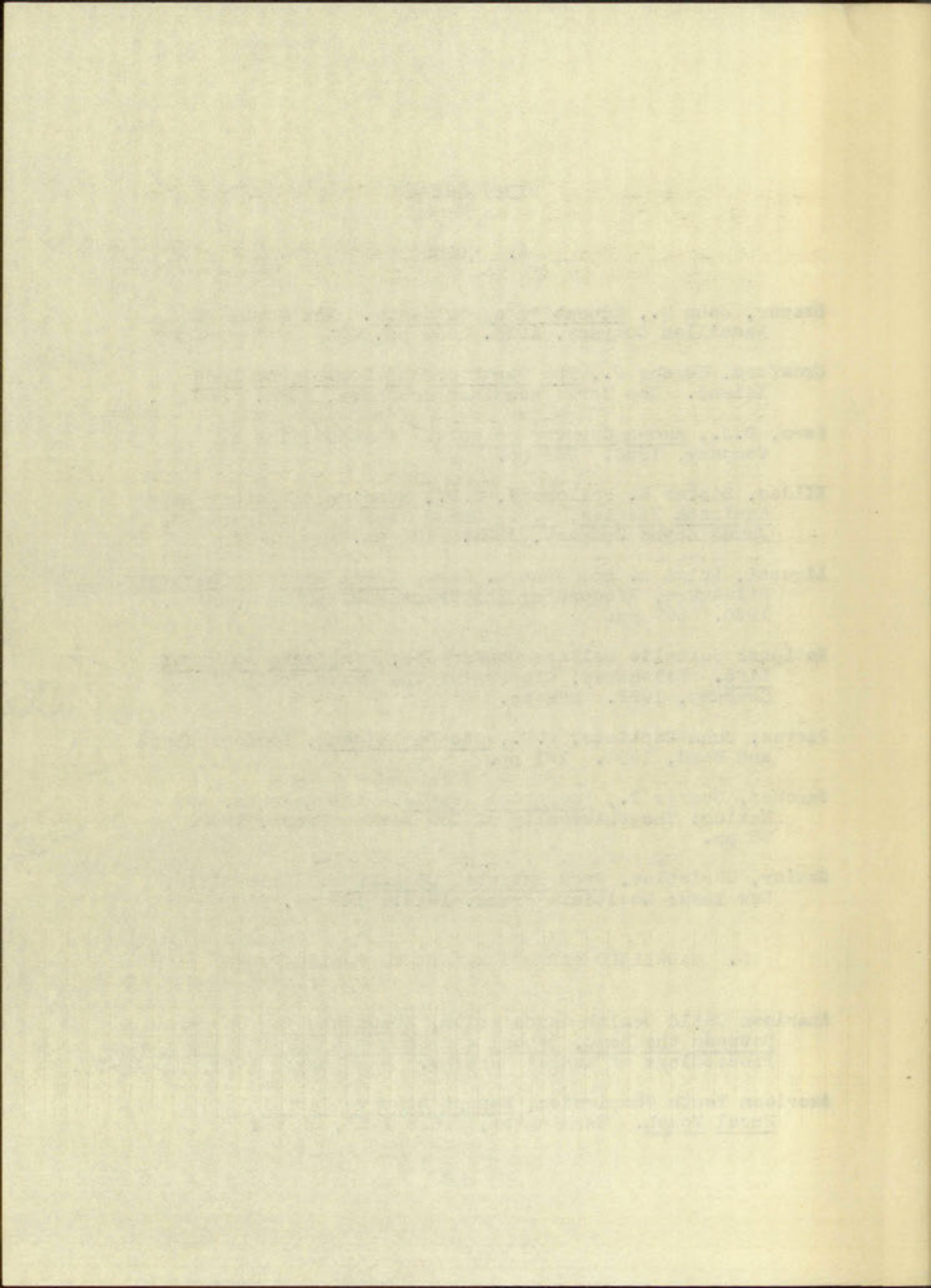
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1890. 1891. 1892. 1893. 1894. 1895. 1896. 1897. 1898. 1899. 1900.

1901. 1902. 1903. 1904. 1905. 1906. 1907. 1908. 1909. 1910. 1911.

1912. 1913. 1914. 1915. 1916. 1917. 1918. 1919. 1920. 1921. 1922.

1923. 1924. 1925. 1926. 1927. 1928. 1929. 1930. 1931. 1932. 1933.

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1967. 1968. 1969. 1970. 1971. 1972. 1973. 1974. 1975. 1976. 1977.

1978. 1979. 1980. 1981. 1982. 1983. 1984. 1985. 1986. 1987. 1988.

1989. 1990. 1991. 1992. 1993. 1994. 1995. 1996. 1997. 1998. 1999.

2000. 2001. 2002. 2003. 2004. 2005. 2006. 2007. 2008. 2009. 2010.

2011. 2012. 2013. 2014. 2015. 2016. 2017. 2018. 2019. 2020. 2021.

2022. 2023. 2024. 2025. 2026. 2027. 2028. 2029. 2030. 2031. 2032.

2033. 2034. 2035. 2036. 2037. 2038. 2039. 2040. 2041. 2042. 2043.

2044. 2045. 2046. 2047. 2048. 2049. 2050. 2051. 2052. 2053. 2054.

2055. 2056. 2057. 2058. 2059. 2060. 2061. 2062. 2063. 2064. 2065.

2066. 2067. 2068. 2069. 2070. 2071. 2072. 2073. 2074. 2075. 2076.

APPENDIX

PLATE 1

INQUIRY BLANK

Dear Sister:

The information requested in this blank will be used in a study dealing with the contributions of our Sisters to education in New Mexico. There is probably a good deal of first-hand information pertinent to the study which is not incorporated in the Community Annals or those of each house. Your assistance in securing the information will greatly facilitate my efforts to gather facts and opinions which will serve to develop a thesis in preparation for the University of New Mexico. Such information as you choose to give will be considered confidential and will not be detailed, but rather incorporated with all other facts which others may contribute.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Sister Maura, O.P.

Name _____

When did you come to New Mexico? _____

To which school were you first assigned? _____

Experience before coming to New Mexico? _____

Type of certificate held in Michigan _____

Type of certificate held in New Mexico _____

Please think over carefully the most urgent problems facing you in the early days of the work of our Community here. This means those problems which you did not have in Michigan and which seemed peculiar to the isolated areas in which you worked. These may have been economic, social, or educational.

Specific problems: e.g. Was there opposition from certain groups?

Did you seek the help of outside agencies either for advice or assistance?

If you did, what were these agencies?

In each case was the agency helpful? If so, in what ways?

If not, was there a disposition to hinder the work?

How was each of the major problems attacked and at least partially solved?

Please think over those things in connection with the problems in general which you, as a Dominican Sister could help to solve, but in which you would have been relatively helpless as an individual outside teacher. State specifically how your being a Sister helped in the solution, e.g. Community furnished home, etc.

On the sheet attached, will you please give the following information.

If you have any pertinent information not included in the Community Annals, would you be willing to write a short statement or survey?

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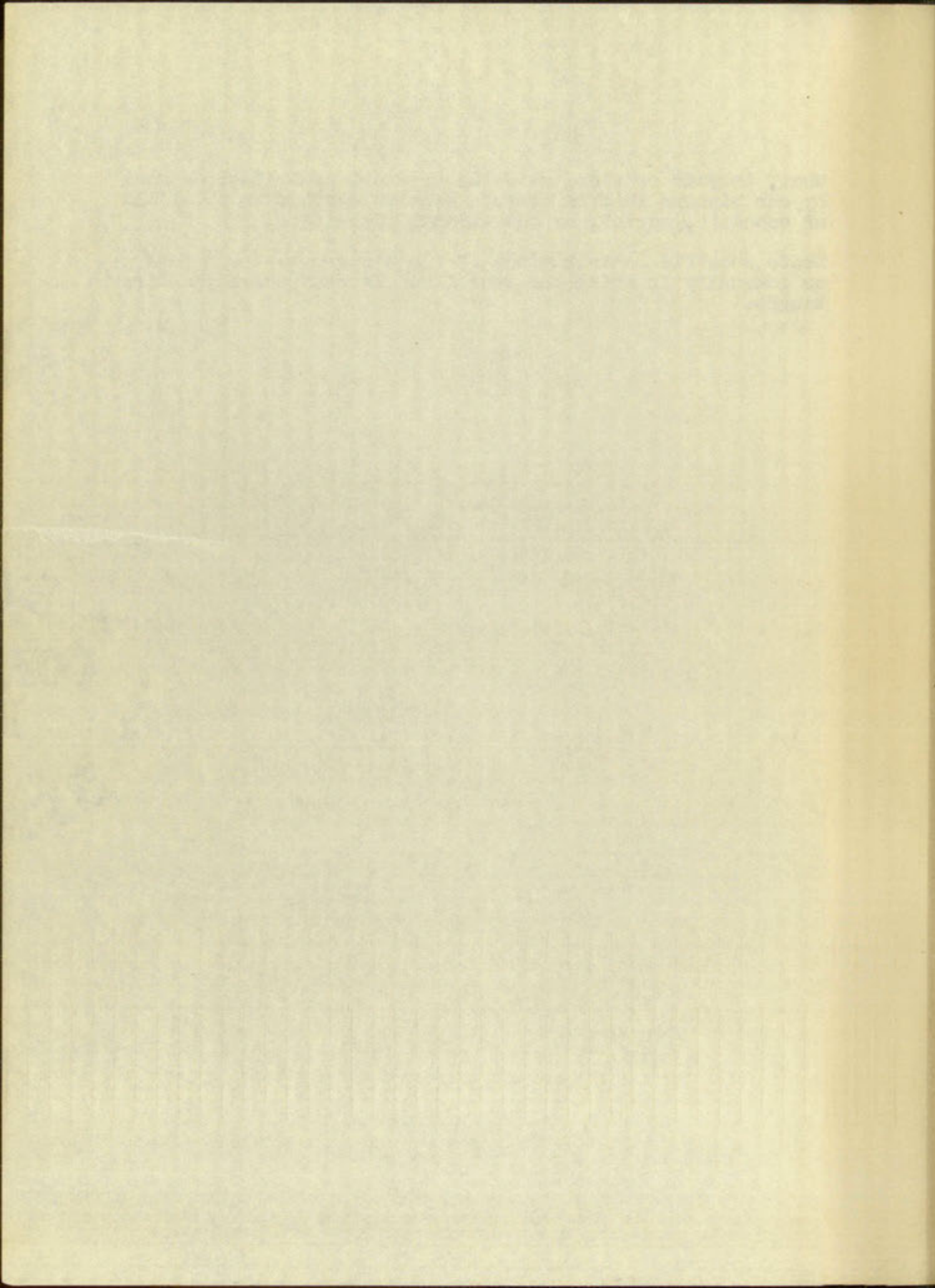
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What, in your opinion, were the greatest contributions made by our Sisters in this state? Mention whether in the field of economic, social, or educational activities.

State specific contributions of the Sisters to the school or community in which the school was located where you first taught.



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