1st Rel 74.

Loreto Abbey
Mary's Mount
Ballarat
July 5th 1937.

Your Excellency,

I wish, with all respect, to call Your Excellency's attention to the fact, that in what I am about to write, I am expressing the opinion of a very large number of the members of the I.B.V.M. in Australia, though only a few are aware that I am writing.

I should also like to mention that the unavoidable criticism of those in authority, is not directed against the persons alluded to, but against the form of government they represent.

1st. Point. Discension between the members of the Institute, and loss of that confidence in Superiors, which is almost essential to the carrying out of the Spirit of our

rule.

During the 1st 50. years of the I.B.V.M. in Aus., under two Provincials, there was entire union between all the members, and perfect confidence in Superiors.

The change began in 1924. when our present Mother Provincial came to Australia. It was clear from the beginning, that her desire was to get the members of the Australian Province to accept Mother F. Ball as their foundress instead of Mary Ward. In this she was but carrying out the instructions of the late Mother General. By degrees she surrounded herself with those who were satisfied to fall in with her views. They were appointed to responsible posts in the Institute, and through them efforts were made to influence the younger nuns especially the novices.

All who adhered to their allegiance to Mary Ward were classed as disloyal, and treated as such. They were kept in total ignorance of what was taking place in the Institute in Ireland or Aus. And their words and actions were submitted to a most humiliating system of espionage.

I should like to stress here that throughout it all, full obedience and outward respect was shown by all to all Superiors.

The state of affairs became so serious that, near the end of Mother Provincial's 1st term of office, a letter representing things, signed by several of the most esteemed members of the Institute, was sent to the General Council at Rathfarnm. Its answer took the form of a severe reprimand for disloyalty in criticising Authority, and Mother Provincial was reappointed.

Mother Provincial is now in her 3rd term of office. Last year she began publicly to acknowledge Mary Ward; why, we do not know, as we are still ignorant of what is taking place in our Institute especially as to the progress of the Cause of Mary Ward. But there has been too much deception practised during all these years to render the establishment of confidence in her possible. And the division among the members still remains.

2nd Point. Presence of a Spirit of Worldliness, and loss of much of the original Spirit of the I.B.V.M. especially in the matter of Poverty.

This is a point not easy to write about, or prove, but it is so evident that it has been noticed even by outsiders.

As to the remedy. The only possible way of healing the breach in the Institute in Australia would be the removal of the present Mother Provincial and the Mistress of Novices. And appointing in their places nuns, imbued with the old spirit of the I.B.V.M. and having the confidence of the Province. We realized however that this would be a drastic measure, and difficult of execution. Our next hope lay in an opportunity being afforded the members of the Institute to place their views before Your Excellency. This is my excuse for intruding myself upon you during a non-official visit.

Another hope is a visit, in person, from our new Mother General. She is said to be very holy and anxious for the spiritual welfare of the Province. Several have written to her asking her to come out, we have heard nothing of the matter, so far, but we thought it might be possible for Your Excellency to see your way towards furthering

our desire.

These are the principal points that I should wish to lay before Your Excellency for consideration.

I apologize for the length of this letter. I trust Your Excellency will believe me when I say that I only write from the desire to see the old peace and fervour of spirit return to our Institute.

Asking Your Excellency's blessing

I remain

Your Excellency's devoted daughter in J.C.

Sr. J. Catherine Goddard

I. B. V. M.