

# CATHOLIC WORKER

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## Commenting on San Francisco

By FR. CLARENCE DUFFY

On April 25, the feast of St. Mark, advance units of the armies of the U. S. and of the U. S. S. R. met and shook hands in Germany. Capitalism met and fraternized with Communism over the dead body of Nazism in the homeland of the latter. Already people in this country are talking of the "inevitable" war which is sure to come "between the two remaining great powers of the earth."

It probably will come, too, unless the people of this country take matters in their own hands and give the interfering, meddling busybodies who are continually speaking for America a lesson in what democracy means, and relegate them to the limbo of silence and oblivion.

If the American people are bulldozed into another war, this time with Soviet Russia, which has immense resources, as well as ideas and opportunities for organizing both East and West under its banner, then those who see that war will, if they live through it, witness the end of what we call civilization.

Surely President Truman had something like that in his mind when he warned the delegates at the San Francisco Conference of the fate which awaited humanity if the foundations of a true peace were not laid there.

Many people were hopeful for what might come out of San Francisco, called after one of the most lovable of the Saints, a true Christian who loved his God, his fellow men, and all God's creatures, and whose *Simple Prayer* is well known to many readers of *The Catholic Worker*. For the benefit of those to whom it is not known, it follows herewith:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace!

Where there is hatred...let me sow love.

Where there is injury...pardon.

Where there is doubt...faith.

Where there is despair...hope.

Where there is darkness...light.

Where there is sadness...joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

To be consoled...as to console.

To be understood...as to understand.

To be loved...as to love,

for

It is in giving...that we receive,

It is in pardoning...that we are pardoned.

It is in dying...that we are born to eternal life.

Unfortunately there was none of the spirit or none of the ideas that pervaded the life of St. Francis at San Francisco, the city which was named after him. How could there be when peace, charity, or love, pardon, faith, hope, light and joy, consolation and understanding, all the things that St. Francis prayed for, are gifts or fruits of the Holy Ghost and can not be had except through Him?

If we are aware of and believe in the teachings of Christ, surely we know that we shall never get peace in this world as long as the world is dominated and ruled by



## To Our Lady

*O glorious Lady, throned in light,  
Sublime above the starry height,  
Thine arms thy great Creator pressed,  
A suckling at thy sacred breast.*

*Through the dear blossom of thy womb  
Thou changest hapless Eva's doom:  
Through thee to contrite souls is given  
An opening to their home in heaven.*

## Rescued From Dead Storage

During the month a lawyer whom I had met only once before came to me at Mott Street and told me of a woman confined to the psychopathic ward at Bellevue for observation, who had been picked up in a restaurant for speaking abusively of the Jews. He wanted to know if I would go to see her, as her relatives were hundreds of miles away, and had not as yet gotten into contact with her. As we are spiritually Semites, and all of us children of Abraham, going to visit this poor woman was in the nature of going to visit an

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men who reject Christ and His teachings. We might as well look for blood from a stone or figs from thistles.

The setting at San Francisco was perfect. The men who occupied the stage were neither aware of nor interested in its possibilities. And so, not according to any man but according to God Himself, who warned us over and over again of the punishments of Godlessness, we can prepare ourselves for more war, unless the people in all countries bestir themselves and begin to live and act as Christians. In that way alone lies peace.

There is no use in kidding ourselves, or letting others kid us, that there is any hope for peace in any other direction. The "peace that the world cannot give" can only come from God. We are not only silly but pagan to think that it can come from men, no matter who they are, or how well meaning they may be.

## THE NEW SLAVERY

NO man should be punished for a crime committed by another.

You agree with that statement in principle. But are you in accord with it in practice?

The answer to that question depends upon whether you support or protest against acts which violate the principle. The answer is of great importance today. It is extremely important because the principle is being violated now in many places over the face of the earth, and other widespread violations are being deliberately planned and enthusiastically supported.

One form of violation is the bombing of civilians. This we have protested since the war began, in accord with the condemnation of the practice by His Holiness, Pope Pius XII. All governments engaged in the war, on both sides, are equally guilty of this terrible crime against humanity.

Another violation, one which is now being planned, is the conscription of labor in the conquered countries to rebuild the cities of the conqueror. This is slavery, to call it by its right name. Can we, as Christians and Americans, agree to the institution of slavery anywhere, under any pretext? Is it now possible for the world to exist half slave and half free, any more than it was fourscore years ago?

What justification is given for the proposed enslavement in Europe? Simply that the Nazi government caused great destruction of enemy cities. It did. But how is it possible to hold individual Germans responsible for the acts of that government, to the extent that they are to be enslaved by their conquerors? Did the people of Germany have any semblance of democratic control over the men who ruled them under the Nazi dictatorship? They were regimented in peace, conscripted in war, and now they are threatened with slavery on foreign soil.

And just who are "they" who are so threatened? Not the old men; no one wants an old laborer. Not the men crippled and disabled in battle, nor the diseased. None of these, but certainly the youngest, the most fit, exactly those farthest removed from any least taint of culpability for the acts of the Nazi government. The boys who have grown up since that totalitarian regime was instituted.

A generation is about to be enslaved. A generation of innocent youths is going to be forced to labor for the conquerors of their nation. Yet we say that no man should be punished for the crime of another. Do we mean it?

This thing had to be said. We have said it. Now it must be repeated without pause or rest if we hope to escape indictment in history as the most cruel and unjust of generations.

## EASY ESSAYS

By PETER MAURIN

### Big Shots and Little Shots

1. When the big shots become bigger shots then the little shots become littler shots
2. And when the little shots become littler shots because the big shots become bigger shots, then the little shots get mad at the big shots.
3. And when the little shots get made at the big shots because the big shots by becoming bigger shots make the little shots littler shots they shoot the big shots full of little shots.
4. But by shooting the big shots full of little shots the little shots do not become big shots, they make everything all shot.

### Better and Better Off

1. The world would be better off, if people tried to become better.
2. And people would become better if they stopped trying to be better off.
3. For when everybody tries to become better off nobody is better off.
4. But when everybody tries to become better everybody is better off.
5. Everybody would be rich if nobody tried to become richer.
6. And nobody would be poor if everybody tried to be the poorest.
7. And everybody would be what he ought to be if everybody tried to be what he wants the other fellow to be.

### IN JAIL

"I have thought your paper a fine thing since I first read a copy two years ago in CPS. Last year in prison we had one old copy that had come in quite by accident, I suppose as wrapping paper on a shipment. Someone retrieved it—probably a Jehovah's Witness with a keen nose for Popery—and thereafter it lived a long underground life, successfully weathering the periodic shakedowns for contraband. Much later, about January of this year, the Catholic Worker was finally blessed with the Bureau of Prisons imprimatur and our first legal copies arrived with Fr. Hugo's supplement on conscription." X. Y.



# CATHOLIC WORKER

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## AGAIN IT IS MAY

"WITH what praises to extol thee we know not, for He whom the heavens could not contain, rested in thy bosom."

Mother of fair love, it is hard to write about you who have given us God. I can only make this a column of thanksgiving. And a very personal column of thanksgiving, for bringing me to the faith through motherhood, for sending me sweet reminders even through Communist friends (a gift of a rosary on one occasion and a little statue on another).

"The feast of our life is often sad," the Hungarian Bishop Prohaszka writes. "There is much heavy food which science and politics provide, but our wine is missing, which should refresh the soul and fill it with pure noble joy of life. Oh, our Mother, intercede with thy Son in our behalf. Show Him our need. Tell Him with trust, 'They have no wine.' He will provide for us."

"Sweet wine, fiery wine, the Lord Jesus gives to our bridal soul; He warms and heats our hearts. Oh, sweet is the wine of the first fiery love, of the first elating zeal!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Black crows feasting on brown ploughed earth,  
White goats leaping in the violets,  
Goats with their wattles,  
Ducks with their waddles,  
Walking in line by the green wheat field.

There is a poem written for my grandchild Rebecca, made a child of God May 6. Some days we think of ourselves as mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Other days we feel like shouting, "All ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord! Praise Him, adore Him, above all forever!"

Spring in the country with its countless duties of ploughing, planting and the care of new creatures! One of the greatest joys in life is bathing a new baby who stretches and yawns and opens its mouth like a little bird for provender. "Give us this day our daily bread!"

THANK God for everything. Thank God that in other countries peasants are ploughing and planting and tending new things—all of them samples of heaven, all of them portents of that new heaven and earth wherein justice dwelleth.

If there are such keen joys and beauties in these times, when we have so recently been living in a sample of hell, how heaven will shine forth. Thank God part of the war is over with, there is a cessation of firing, peace of a sort has descended on earth. God is good. He has saved us from utter destruction when we were on the path to it. He has stopped us for a time in Europe. Leaving out of account Divine Providence there is chaos and destruction ahead, and injustices breeding new wars. But we cannot leave out of account Divine Providence, so we can live in hope and faith and charity, and rejoice and continue to pray and do penance to end the war in the East and avert another war.

We must rejoice this month of May and let our glance of joy rest on beauty around us. It would be thankless to do otherwise.

There are the joys of friendship, the very joy of being thankful. We have to thank all our friends who have answered our appeal and beg them further to pray that we will be good stewards. "Love is an exchange of gifts," St. Ignatius says, so we owe them many prayers, daily prayers, that God will bless them and that they may see their children's children, and peace on Israel.

If there are such keen joys and beauty in such times as these, how heaven will shine forth. I like to think of Father Faber's writings on life and death. He quotes at the conclusion of one of these sermons, "My beloved to me and I to Him, who feedeth among the lilies till the daybreak and the shadows retire." And then he repeats with joy, "Till the day break, and the shadows retire. Till the day break and the shadows retire." If these joys are shadows, what can such bliss be?

## Anniversary

For twelve years the CATHOLIC WORKER has been published. We have at the present a single subscriber list of 23,000 and

what we call the bundle file, (orders of two to a thousand) go out to 27,500 more. Back in 1938 before the war started, we printed 190,000 copies of an anniversary issue, and thanks to thirty Houses of Hospitality over the country, and widespread circulation in many schools and colleges, we had a regular run of 160,000 copies a month. Since the war, and our pacifist stand, our circulation has dropped to 50,500, and is continually rising in the single copy list. We feel now that this is a tried and true crowd of readers, and our mail bag shows how articulate a body of friends we have amassed during the years, friends who have become apostles.

They know us all, they participate with us, directly and indirectly in the works of mercy. Sooner or later in the course of years, thousands of them find their way to New York on business or holiday or pilgrimage, and they come to the House of Hospitality and help serve soup or mail out the paper. Wherever we have visited groups, spoken at meetings we have emphasized that there is bed and board at Mott Street or at the farm, and partly due to the war, an unbelievable number of our readers have become personal friends.

They see our needs and try to furnish us the means to do the work. Sister Bernice saw that we needed bread-raisers for the bakery and supplied us with



WATER CRESS

four of them. Iola Ellis from Cleveland visited the farm and sent some much needed bedroom equipment. Some high school girls from Holy Child Academy visited the bread line, and brought dish towels and sheets.

### Needed a Freezer

Big things have come in, like a station wagon (Joe Zarrella prayed for that) and an electric ice box (that took years of praying). And now we are starting a campaign of prayer for a freezer for the farm, so that we can slaughter a pig or a sheep and have meat for our retreats, and for Mott Street too, when the gas regulations let up and we can travel back and forth.

Chu and Shortie and George, who work in the kitchen deserve all the help they can get. We're going to have to kidnap them to take them on a vacation to the farm this summer, they are so faithful to their work of serving the line. Last week some girls who came down served the soup and washed bowls, and we hope there will be more and more doing it. We begin serving at four-thirty and work till six so any afternoon the girls are welcome. In the morning Slim and Bill run the coffee line. Yesterday as I helped, I counted seventy-five and they had two and three helpings of stew and bread, and some of the bread was homemade bread baked by Maureen Gil the day before.

As to the bakery, we still haven't enough helpers to keep

## Dead Storage

(Continued from page 1)

enemy in trouble. Having known of some unhappy experiences with this same psychopathic ward of Bellevue hospital, I readily agreed.

The sad experiences were these: On one occasion our friend Tim O'Brien, now overseas, well known to our readers as writer of many of the Ben Joe Labray articles, and other things for this paper and the Commonwealth, collapsed from the heat in a sub-basement of Child's. When he came to, he found himself in the psychopathic ward and it took him several days to get out.

On another occasion, it took me some time to rescue a Mrs. Deane who had stayed in our House of Hospitality, who was attacked on her way home one night and who on her making a complaint to the police, was kept for weeks at Bellevue in this same ward, and only because we went to court for her, escaped being confined.

Another experience is that of our friend John Ferguson, who died last month, and who had been with the Catholic Worker for some years. He had worked as night watchman and occasionally he "celebrated," as the saying is. On one occasion he rolled off the dock where he was watchman, and was rescued and brought to the hospital, and from there sent to one of the mental hospitals out on Long Island. He worked there for three years, without pay, virtually a prisoner, and it was only after he had been able to get some clothes which did not distinguish him from visitors that he was able to walk out one Sunday afternoon and found his way to us here on Mott Street. He told us his history afterward when he was trying to get his old age pension. Not being able to account for those three years of his life, he knew he was going to have a hard time getting his pension. He was with us for years and we never saw any indication of mental or nervous trouble.

The last experience we had was strangest of all. There was a shell-shocked veteran of the last war living with us and helping us in the kitchen. He usually washed dishes, and hung around the kitchen, and on two occasions when an argument came up as to the war, he became violent, throwing one man down stairs and another almost through the window. Not long after, he threatened Arthur Sheehan, the meekest and gentlest of men, and that Summer noon suddenly tore the crucifix from the wall of the kitchen, threw it in front of Arthur and seized a knife. A tragedy was narrowly averted and we called the police, explaining the circumstances to them. They took him away, only to have him return to us the next morning! I went again to the police station, complained, and demanded that he be given needed hospital

it going. Girls come only on Saturdays to bake and we have not yet started to bake in quantity. We are praying for workers, and we need a good strong girl with powerful arms, who can come down and take over that essentially womanly job of feeding the hungry. As it is, we have taught each girl that came to us to bake bread. It is important, of the utmost importance. Christ feeds us, and He has said to us, "Feed My Sheep." And as women we should take it literally, and feed the needy with good strong whole wheat bread to build up bodies and souls for Christ.

care. After many protests, the police called an ambulance again and had Harry taken away. Within thirty days he was out again, although I wrote to the doctors in charge of the psychiatric division of Bellevue Hospital and explained the whole situation to them. They ignored my letter and released him; this man who had made an attempt on the life of another.

These experiences will explain my complete lack of confidence in this division of Bellevue Hospital and my readiness to visit the woman whom we will call Miss Jones.

When I went to see her it was in the capacity of a social worker, and since she had never heard of the Catholic Worker, I explained our work as social work. (Social workers are privileged in being allowed to visit prisons and hospitals without observing the regular visiting hours.)

While I was visiting the patient and talking to her of her situation, and trying to find out whether her sister would be able to reach her and rescue her before she was sent out on the island, a doctor came in whom I later found to be Dr. Frank J. Curran, senior psychiatrist and assistant professor of the New York University School of Medicine. His manner was so brusque, so rude, that it did not seem possible to me that he was a doctor. He threw a paper on the table before us, and said: "Your case will come up for trial tomorrow morning and it is my intention to recommend that you be committed to a mental hospital." There was an edge in his voice and a harshness in his tone which I thought ill fitted a doctor supposedly treating mental patients. If it was true that the woman was mental there was no sense in getting angry at her. She should be treated with sympathy and consideration. Granted that she was irritating, had prejudice and an ugly manner of talking, that she disagreed with the administration of government and thought the Jews were running everything, still I could not see, from my talk with her, that this point of view should be punished by her being sent away to a mental hospital.

(I remembered our friend John Griffin, who had been transferred from the tubercular hospital on Welfare Island to the psychopathic ward because he had quarreled with the help and complained about the food. Our old friend Hergenham, who wrote a few articles for us about conditions in the Municipal Lodging House, had also been threatened with the psychopathic ward for criticizing conditions.)

I am not so much criticizing our hospitals themselves (though we may do that in future articles) as the attitude of mind of such doctors as Dr. Curran, and whoever else were in charge at the time these incidents that I am talking about occurred.

The reason I consider the situation dangerous is because after the war there are going to be many more cases, hundreds of thousands of cases, of young men who are apt to be sent away into a confinement worse than death. They are going into those gigantic warehouses for dead storage, as one of our friends calls them, and there be neglected and forgotten unless their relatives are warned beforehand. If they fall into melancholy and despair at the situation in which they find themselves, it will be all the harder to get them out,

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# + From The Mail Bag +

## From San Francisco

San Francisco, Calif.

Dear Dorothy:

It was good to hear from you. Here you are constructing tabernacles to the Lord when the mass of men seem preoccupied with destruction. We have felt the impact of the war and its dread spirit freezing the life of religion to a standstill. Most of our vigorous young priests are in the military service, so Catholic Action is mainly in abeyance here until the war ends.

There is a passage in *Plea for Liberty* by Bernanos that struck home on this point. He said he was tired of the word crusade. "It is possible to have crusaders without a crusade, but it is inconceivable to have a crusade without crusaders."

The great need of Holy Mother Church is apostles and the teaching function must be inspired and determined by that objective if we are to follow the way of Christ. The critical appraisal of my own profession is so frightening—to direct the Catholic educational program to the Catholic ideal of life will demand a spirited conflict with the many who are tainted by secularism and individualism. This would seem a far too sweeping criticism of defect, if one could not cite Pope Pius XI on the point. Monsignor George Johnson's address at Trinity College in Washington was a striking dramatic confirmation too. He spoke of "realism" and secularism as shaping the kind of persons we are today and the almost overpowering odds that face Catholic ideals. Then, at the words "We still have a lot to learn about educating unto Christ in a world that knows not Christ," he was stricken and died. The last sentence of his address, never spoken but literally enacted, was "Die and you shall live and live abundantly." And he said that that was the truest, most substantial advice that can be given to a Catholic graduate today. It is the responsibility of our department of education and of all real Christian teachers to discover how to give that advice so that it takes.

I think the clearest mind on this subject in our land is Mortimer Jerome Adler. It is paradoxical to find this intellectual gadfly spurring Christians to renew themselves in truth: *St. Thomas and the Gentiles* (Marquette University Press) is the means he suggests. And he is sponsoring educational techniques that are so Catholic that we have long forgotten them in imitation of the pragmatic methods now so unstable.

The work of the educator then is to perfect the means whereby men may be perfected through instruction and study, and the perfection that is Catholic must be pointed to the two great commandments. Perhaps my limited powers can best contribute to advancement in this limited special sphere. The organizational, "sociological" work to which I have given so much time is in the main superficial in terms of the solid virtues of religion, and something of a dissipation for a philosopher who must live on contemplation.

Prayer, study, action, is the order. There is progress only in one direction; the fullness of action springs from understanding, and the fullness of understanding flows from wisdom and love. Some of my boys in the service are discovering this amid the imminent deadly perils. Several of them are reading the "Confessions of St. Augustine" in Australia, Florida and the

South Seas. But the need of prayer in education is so desperate—John Henry Newman should inspire an "Idea of a Liberal College."

How much we shall need the Catholic Worker movement after the war! It is useless to speculate on social conditions, but even at the best the dislocation produced by the present chaos will never be settled. There will be so many lost in the streets of strange cities and countless homeless souls seeking corporal and spiritual solace. Countless parishes might well consider the need for hospices—if there were "servant-leaders" for them. What we need is the Christian function for which the Apostles appointed "deacons." The restoration of that function in the Church today—without prejudice of name or title—might be the solution of the social problem of the Church and the assimilation of communism into a Christian democracy. You and Peter may prove pioneers in the new order. So you must have associates who will learn from you. I shall pray as fervently for the progress of your work as I shall for my very own, for they are two stones in the edifice of *Actio Catholica*, which many unfortunately translate as Catholic activity.

If I come upon anyone else who is interested in the improvement of the common man I shall tell him about Maryfarm and the retreat house instead of Henry Wallace. The enclosed check won't go far on the roof but it may stop a tiny leak. You'll need St. Joseph on the job!

JAMES L. HAGERTY.

## Extermination

Dear Editors:

I read in your paper of February your article, "Background for Peter Maurin." You mention the subject to *blatta orientalis* and *cimex lectularius* (c-r and b-b). For the first of these there is a cure that I knew of 50 years ago; a powder to be obtained then on West 13th Street, New York City. Spread around, this leads to quick extermination. To be sure, only in isolated houses would this be completely effective; for a tenement there would have to be concerted action. The above is for *blatta*.

As for *cimex*, I do not know if there is a good powder. I think kerosene oil will work spread in the cracks of bedsteads and other furniture and behind cracks in wall paper.

This indeed costs some money, but I think not very much.

I read your paper with interest. It comes addressed to my son, now on the western front.

Yours respectfully,

NEAL H. EWING.

## Patience

Cantate Sunday,  
Blessed Martin Center,  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Editors:

Perhaps this selection from the lesson of the second nocturn will encourage you as they did me today. Thank God for the Office in English.

St. Cyprian on Patience: "Patience is a virtue we share in common with God Himself; from Him patience takes its rise, from Him is derived its glory and its dignity. Patience, in its origin and its greatness, proceeds from God as its author. That should indeed be loved by man which is dear to God. The divine majesty commends to man this love of patience. If God is to us both Lord and Father, let us seek to imitate His patience; for it behooves servants to be faithful in

their service, and it ill becomes sons to be unworthy of their parentage.

"Patience it is that both commands and binds us to God: this it is that restrains anger, that bridle the tongue, governs the mind, maintains peace, regulates discipline, breaks the force of evil desires, checks the violence of rising passions, quenches the flame of hatred, controls the power of the rich, consoles the neediness of the poor, safeguards the blessed integrity of virgins, the laborious chastity of widows, the faithful love of relatives and married folk; this it is that makes men humble in prosperity, courageous in adversity, meek under insults and injuries; it teaches us promptly to forgive offenders; and when we ourselves offend, to pray for pardon long and earnestly; it overcomes temptations, endures persecutions, and crowns sufferings and martyrdoms with success. This it is that mightily upholds the foundation of our faith."

Father Knox translates the second beatitude, "Blessed are the patient." After reading what St. Cyprian says about it, we come to some idea of its meaning.

Love, to all, in Christ,

JIM ROGAN.

## Sister Ruth

Mount St. Joseph, Ohio

Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus.  
Dear Editors:

For several years I have been following your activities in the Catholic Worker. Always I have had the greatest respect for the Christian ideal expressed there and have been happy to think that if I love you I am united with you and share in your good work as a member of the Mystical Body of Christ.

However, for the first time I found yesterday an article exposing theories that struck me as being difficult to square with the Spirit of Christ Jesus. It is the article in the December issue: Poverty and Pacifism.

For the first time I have found it hard to follow your line of thinking and to accept it wholeheartedly. Perhaps I have misunderstood your meaning. As I see it now, your idea of poverty is really not poverty, but protest (and protest is so close to Protestantism, negation, whereas Christianity is assertive and positive).

As I look at the poverty of Christ shown us by our Mother the Church during the Christmas season it seems to be less a policy of "refusal to enjoy comforts" than a demonstration of independence of creature comforts proper to the children of a Father who is God. God does not need the comforts of home, the attention of medical experts, and all the paraphernalia of bourgeois society in order to be a successful, joyful, perfect man. Poverty, it seems to me, is directed toward freedom of spirit. And freedom is more than protest.

And that poverty that refuses to use such and such a commodity because of some injustice implicated in its manufacture or upkeep—is that Christian poverty? If we refuse to have contact with anything in which injustice has had some incidental part, I think that if we were to search out all such injustice, we would be forced to live in a vacuum this side of Heaven, separated from all things and above all from ourselves. Boycotts do not have a place in the life of Christ. He eats with sinners, unjust men.

And St. Francis, that master of the art of being poor—does he refuse to live in comfort as a protest against social injustice? It is to enjoy the freedom of the

children of God, which is not so much "freedom from want" as "freedom from wants." (Fr. Meeus, by the way, did he walk out of protest against low-wage coolie-rickshaw labor, or because walking is in China very often the safest, fastest, most dependable means of locomotion?)

I must stop, leaving much unsaid.

The box of candy, a Christmas gift I am re-gifting to you, is sent not in protest against nuns having candy given to them, but as a gesture of love for you and your poor. It is a ludicrous gift, I know, when it is food and meat and clothes you need. But this superfluity is all I have to offer, all that I have permission to give, except what is too vast to be wrapped and too all-pervading to be sent by post.

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,  
Sister Ruth Adelaide.

## From a Prison Worker

Hartford, Conn.

Dear Editors:

In answer to your appeal, here is a one-dollar bill; sorry I cannot send you more. But my income is so small and there are other appeals to meet also.

It seems wonderful that you can turn your Maryfarm into a Retreat House. Week-long retreats would be wonderful, because the poor do need so much more than food and clothing.

Your poor must often resemble my prisoners in my jails, my poor drunkards and ne'er-do-wells, and my unhappy prostitutes and those who have broken the peace. For ten years I have been working among them, and when I look, it seems in comparison with the great need that the accomplishment is very, very small, but God only knows.

I do not talk religion to them every time. They know that I come to them because of the love of Christ the Word—and He is the Word in all really inspired literature and in beauty. At present I am spending most of my time in restoring and improving my mural painting of the Charge to St. Peter in the Connecticut State prison. It is from His Word when He said to Peter, "Lovest thou Me?" and Peter's answer showed Peter's conversion, "Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee!"

I want to bring my prisoners and our prison officials to that Peter-state of mind! I suppose the Catholic Worker will give a report on your retreat plan.

God bless you. Faithfully in our Lord's Name.

Genevieve Cowles.

## A Letter to Women

It seems to me that the best way to give millions of women wholesome first-rate jobs after the war is to lift housework to its rightful place. Women should gladly give up war jobs to go back to housekeeping. Girls should consider housework of all kinds satisfying work.

All over the world we find that the occupation women seem to enjoy least is housework. Wives will scrimp and save to get money for a "cleaning lady" to do their manual labor. Sisters in convents, even, dislike to cook, scrub and iron. Girls who hire out into homes are looked down on, laughed at.

Now, housework does not deserve to be considered degrading, for it is necessary and therefore in itself, good. It requires planning and foresight. It utilizes soul, mind and body. Housework requires human intelligence and that is more than can be said for the factory job.

How can anyone consider it on

the same low level as factory work? The houseworker has a much greater opportunity to use her intelligence and free will even than the office worker. Her simple task of washing dishes gives her more happiness than the secretary's supposedly complex task of typing a letter.

Certainly there is more happiness for the girl whose Monday finds her washing and watching sheets sparkle in the sun than for the factory girl whose Monday is just eight tedious hours of drudgery—an eternity of boredom.

At the end of the day the houseworker. (Sister, wife, hired girl, etc.) will have neat piles of fresh linen in the closet. She will have tubs scoured and put away. She will have her basement floor hosed clean. She will have children "tucked in" and a full day planned ahead.

She will have happiness and contentment at the end of the day because she has done needed work and done it well.

The poor factory girl will have nothing to show for her day's work. She has not used her God-given created mind. She is restless and irritable because she is not happy. Yet, she cannot find out what is wrong with her life.

She spends her evening vainly seeking happiness from cards, shows and dancing. She buys pleasures instead of happiness, for happiness cannot be bought. It can only be made. The pleasure soon goes away and she is discontented as ever.

No thinking person can deny that housework is needed, wholesome, satisfying work. Yet, who is it then, who has brought about this degradation?

Have the employers themselves kicked around their girl helpers—made them eat in the kitchen, sleep in the worst room in the house, tolerate insults, looked down on them and "privileged" them to go to Church until girls can't bear it?

Or is it the girls themselves who have just been weaned away from homework by protesting parents?

Housework must be lifted up, up to the place where God intends it to be.

E. A. HUSLEY.

## New Leaders

"The rulers of the world have declared war on Christian ideals. They have no desire to convert or to educate Germany. The German problem is at its roots a spiritual and religious problem and cannot be cured by military occupation. Religious and political leaders must arise in Germany to exercise as powerful an influence for good as Hitler has exercised for evil." (Tom Sargant, Commonwealth Party, England.)

## Taproot

"While the Great Powers are allowed to raise conscript armies without hindrance or limit it would be vain to expect the lasting preservation of world peace. If the instrument is ready for use, the occasion will arrive and the men will arise to use it. I look upon conscription as the taproot of militarism; unless that is cut out, all our labors will eventually be in vain."—General Jan Smuts.

God's work is never done in ideal conditions.

One soul is diocese enough for a bishop.

The spirit of faith makes us see the Will of God in all things.



# The Man Born Blind

Suggestions for Meditation

By DAVID MASON

A MAN born blind lived with us for several weeks recently. Intimate association with him strengthened my belief that of all afflictions this one arouses the deepest pity, and is deserving of it.

It is virtually impossible for one gifted with sight to comprehend the devastating implications of total blindness. I close my eyes and think: To be blind is to be like this always; but that is a feeble and futile effort to reproduce the actual condition. I know that I have seen, and will see again as soon as my eyes are open. The man born blind knows that he has never seen, and never will. He has only the faintest notion of the nature of sight. "If it is like the sunlight when I feel it on my face," he says. "It is a way to feel things without going near them." He knows that blindness prevents him from doing things, and it is on this fact that his awareness of deprivation centers, rather than on his inability to see the beauty and the ugliness of the world.

The spiritual implications of blindness are deep and far-reaching. Scriptural references to the condition are many. Protection of the blind is commanded in the book of Leviticus, 19:14: "Thou shalt not speak evil of the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind: but thou shalt fear the Lord thy God because I am the Lord." And in Deuteronomy, 27:18, we are told: "Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of his way."

But of far greater significance than this solicitude for the physically blind is the very frequent Scriptural use of blindness as a figure of speech to describe persons whose hearts and minds are closed to God. This figure is used five times in the 42d chapter of Isaiah, and immediately again in the eighth verse of the 43d chapter. We find telling use of it in St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, Chapter 4, verses 17 and 18: "This then I say and testify in the Lord: That henceforward you walk not as also the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind: Having their understanding darkened: being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts."

Because of the blindness of their hearts. This must mean that their hearts are closed to grace, just as the blind eye is closed to light, for grace is the light of the soul. A soul without grace is like the man born blind, in that it does not even know what grace is, just as the sightless man has no comprehension of the nature of light. But the soul is more fortunate, in that God has provided means for it to obtain grace in this life. Unfortunately soul, if it does not use those means (the Sacraments) for it will be born blind into the next world. It will be unable to see God.

It would seem that the blind are sent among us as a means of making us aware of the sad condition of gracelessness. In fact, our Lord made use of the parallel when the Pharisees questioned Him after he gave sight to the man born blind. The beautiful story of the miracle is told in the ninth chapter of the Gospel accord-

## BOOK REVIEW

THE CHRISTIAN STATE, by A. J. Osgniach, O.S.B. Ph.D.

THE author has compiled a primer of value alike to the scholar and to the man on the street. In his own words: "Moreover, we have reached such a stage of mental degeneration as to confound truth with falsity, justice with injustice, the good with evil. All possible means have been employed to render these ideas ever more uncertain and vague. The unhappy result of all this is that modern man, having emancipated himself from God and traditional morality, remains now a victim of his own egoism and passions. . . ."

"Aquinas begins his ethics with the problem of the end or aim of man. A proper evaluation of this end furnishes us with the only possible norm of merit and demerit in human actions; it is the Magna Charta of individual and social liberties. . . . The true end of man cannot be repudiated without proclaiming the triumph of might over right, and without immolating the individual on the altar of the State. In the light of their true end, all men are brethren and sons of the same heavenly Father; the slave becomes conscious of his dignity as a person and realizes that like his master he, too, is possessor of sacred and inviolable rights; the State ceases to be a despot and becomes a helper and defender of individual, family and social rights."

"In his Allocution of June 9, 1862, Pius IX thus condemns pantheism: 'With a perversity only equaled by their folly, they (the pantheists) dare to assert that the supreme all-wise, all-provident Deity has no existence apart from the visible universe; that God and nature are the same, and similarly subject to change; that God is modified in man and the world; and that everything is God and possesses the very essence of the Divinity. If God and the world then are one and the same thing, there is no difference between spirit and matter, necessity and liberty, truth and falsehood, good and evil, right and wrong. In truth nothing can be imagined more insane, impious and irrational than this teaching (pantheism).' The Pope shows

ing to St. John. The importance of that miracle is indicated by the fact that the story is longer than that of any other miracle except the raising of Lazarus.

There is need for long meditation on the fact that the soul which leaves this world without grace will be unable to see God through all eternity. And there is consolation for the man born blind in the thought that if he dies in a state of grace his first vision will be the sight of God.



how absolutism in the State follows logically from pantheism. They (the pantheists) attack and endeavor to destroy the rights of all lawful property, and with perverse mind and purpose imagine and coin for themselves an unlimited, uncircumscribed right which the State is to enjoy, the State being, in their rash judgment, the organ and source of all right.

"Huxley, one of its ablest exponents, defines materialism as that correlation of all the phenomena of the universe with matter and motion which lies at the heart of modern physical science. In short, matter and motion constitute the origin and source words of Lacordaire: 'Materialism denies that God or the human soul exists; asserts that all mental activities are functions of the organism; and claims that sensible experience is the limit of human knowledge. In the words of Lacordaire: 'Materialism is the result of that exterminating war of evil against good; it is but the supreme effort to stifle remorse. And this is why I call it an abject and unnatural doctrine. If this should seem rash, I offer no apology. You attack my very essence, you degrade me to mere animality, you treat me as the equal of a dog! What do I say?—you dare to write that 'Man is a digestive tube pierced at both ends.'"

"The denial by naturalism of the existence of a higher order (or to put it bluntly—the denial of God) logically results in atheistic and materialistic systems of government. . . . The guiding maxim would be and too frequently is: Do what you like, provided you don't get caught. . . . The morality of naturalism is working itself into American life and the daily press give us constant evidence of the consequences. An ever-increasing delinquency; audacious and enormous thefts; political graft; numberless murders and rackets; evil moral customs; the breakdown of family life which threatens the very core of society. Again the unscrupulous squandering of public funds is of frequent occurrence; high offices are sought not for the common well-being but rather for the gratification of egotistic selfish and unworthy motives. . . . To sum up in the words of Cardinal Manning: 'When God made man, He made society; society springs out of the creation of man because from man comes the family, and from the family come the people, and from the people the State. The whole civil order of the world is nothing but the growth of that society which lay in the first man, as the tree lies in the seed. Therefore in our very nature is the society of mankind.'"

This book read in the light of the Encyclical Letter on the Mystical Body of Christ, and the Christmas Message of 1944, will be a source and "fountain of life" amidst a sea of swirling false ideologies.

HAROLD KEANE.



# CULT :: CULTIV

COLOGNE:

A Cross for the World

AT first the story seemed too good to be true. The Cologne cathedral was "structurally intact" in spite of the thoroughgoing obliteration bombings that wiped most of the city off the face of the earth. Some of the papers we read went so far as to refer to its escape as miraculous. Miracle or not, we heaved a great sigh of relief and thanked God for the accuracy of our bombardiers and turned to the other news of that day—including the report that Dortmund had been added to the list of "dead" German cities in one powerful blow by Allied air power.

Relief and reverent gratitude were the first reactions. But, strangely, this was not to be all. This news item did not drop so easily from our interest. Instead it grew and took on new aspects, so that every now and then we found Cologne—or, rather, the memory of Cologne—forcing itself into our thoughts. Maybe it was the poignant little report about the children who were terror-stricken whenever they heard the sound of a plane, or any sound resembling that of a plane. Perhaps it was the impact of a vision of hundreds of thousands of people spending most of their waking hours in rat holes under a shaking city. Sometimes we found ourselves asking, "Why?" Sometimes we felt a chilling realization of Cologne's future meaning to the world when our consciences struggled with persistently probing, challenging thought: God! How they must hate us.

But always we could comfort ourselves by recalling that picture of the cathedral, the prize of the ages, preserved. True, the historic Rathshaus, the quaint Gothic houses and shops lining countless ancient streets—these things that most of us will know only by description—were gone. Perhaps we caught ourselves questioning this, too. After all, these objectives were not too military in their individual importance (except in so far as they housed and served civilians engaged in the same "total war effort" we praise so highly in our own civilians); these objectives were not too strategic in their value (in fact, the destruction of the city meant merely another headache to its eventual reconstruction authority and served to add new and precious spirit to a dying and desperate nation). There must have been some reason for mercilessly saturating Cologne with exploding death; that much is evident upon looking at the honeycombs of ruin that once were homes. Almost reason would tempt us to doubt that the assurances from on high that "terror bombing" is not, and has never been, an Allied policy. And anyway, we were told, the cathedral was saved—or, rather, remains "structurally intact"; that should be cause enough for joy.

I do not know how many decades have passed since the completion of that structure; nor could I tell you how many generations (Continued on page 7)

Landw

By SISTER MA

O, ye who are idle, and hungry See! Mother Earth offers her To shelter you, to feed you, you Her secrets offer you occupation

Riding goes the family On a dark Sunday afternoon The horses start off jauntily But soft the earth; the ride

Bring out the plow! Bring out the hoe! Bring out the

We plow, plow, plow! We spade, spade, spade! We hoe, hoe, hoe! We rake, rake, rake.

Walking goes the family A bright Sunday afternoon The early birds are all an Our seed cannot be in too s



Scatter in the golden grain: drop Melon seed, and pumpkin seed, seed.

We throw, throw, throw; We drill, drill, drill; We drop, drop, drop; We pat, pat, pat.

Who wants to go for a boat To glide where the bright light We gather them for the food For this is flower time; this

Then weed the beds! Pull the Build up the hills! Clean the

We watch for sprouts; We dread the droughts, We pray for rain; We fear in vain.

All to keep cool on a warm We take a good cold lunch While some hunt the quail: Returning in the setting sun

We see the growing grain; we What joy the growing grain! V

We mow, mow, mow, We shock, shock, shock; We stack, stack, stack; We thresh, thresh, thresh.

Our joy you see in singing and Family prayer crowns the long Our God we praise in dancing, See! How Mother Earth caresses



# CULTURE ATION ::



rd Ho!

Y NORBERT

and homeless!  
road warm breast:  
to caress;  
endless.

on:

spoils soon.

he spade!  
e rake!

ting;  
on.



l in the yellow corn;  
nion seed, celery seed, lettuce

ing?

lies are floating;  
of Our Lady's Shrine;  
is joyous May time.

hoking vines!  
ws of corn!

Sunday afternoon  
to the shady pool  
some fish, some play, some doze  
n, we all rejoice.

atch the ripening grain.  
hat feast the gathered grain!

in dancing.  
evenings spent in reading.  
singing, and in playing  
you and loves you!

## In Prayerful Dance

:to Mary Imelda Buckley:

The lilting beauty that is in your dance  
Is only part of what is in your soul.  
Ofttimes it seems when you, head high, advance,  
In prayerful dance, your Maker you extol.

For who can tell what's in the depths of being,  
That raises us to such majestic heights?  
This thing that is beyond our knowing or seeing,  
But which we feel in spiritual delights.

Each simple movement you embellish so,  
Pass here and there with grace and joy and ease;  
You wing and wind with heavenward surge, as tho  
The longing in your soul for God, appease.

Your dancing is an outflowing of your soul;  
And in your rhythm poetry you unroll.

LIAM FITZGIBBON.

## Making Bread

From "Cottage Economy," by William Cobbett

IN the last number, I observed that I hoped it was unnecessary for me to give any directions as to the mere act of making bread. But several correspondents inform me that without these directions a conviction of the utility of baking bread at home is of no use to them. Therefore, I shall here give those directions, receiving my instruction here from one who, I thank God, does know how to perform this act.

Suppose the quantity be a bushel of flour. Put this flour into a trough that people have for the purpose, or it may be in a clean smooth tub of any shape if not too deep, and if sufficiently large. Make a pretty deep hole in the middle of this heap of flour. Take (for a bushel) a pint of good fresh yeast, mix it and stir it well up in a pint of soft water, milkwarm. Pour this into the hole in the heap of flour. Then take a spoon and work it round the outside of this body of moisture so as to bring into that body, by degrees, flour enough to make it form a thin batter, which you must stir about well for a minute or two. Then take a handful of flour, and scatter it thinly over the head of this batter, so as to hide it. Then cover the whole over with a cloth to keep it warm; and this covering, as well as the situation of the trough, as to distance from the fire, must depend on the nature of the plate and state of the weather as to heat and cold. When you perceive that the batter has risen enough to make cracks in the flour that you covered it over with, you begin to form the whole mass into dough, thus; you begin round the hole containing the batter, working the flour into the batter, and pouring in, as it is wanted to make the flour mix with the batter, soft water milk-warm or milk, as hereafter to be mentioned. Before you begin this you scatter the salt over the heap at the rate of half a pound to a bushel of flour. When you have got the whole sufficiently moist, you knead it well. This is a grand part of the business; for, unless the dough is well worked, there will be little round lumps of flour in the loaves; and besides the original batter, which is to give fermentation to the whole, will not be duly mixed. The dough must, therefore, be well worked. The fists must go heartily into it. It must be rolled over, pressed out, folded up and pressed out again, until it be completely mixed and formed into a stiff and tough dough. This is labor, mind. I have never quite liked baker's

bread since I saw a great heavy fellow in a bakehouse in France kneading bread with his naked feet. His feet looked very white to be sure; whether they were of the color before he got into the trough I could not tell. God forbid that I should suspect that this is ever done in England! It is labor, but what is exercise other than labor? Let a young woman bake a bushel once a week, and she will do very well without phials and gallipots.

Thus then the dough is made, and when made it is to be formed into a lump in the middle of the trough, and with a little dry flour thinly scattered over it, covered over again to be kept warm and to ferment; and in this state, if all be done rightly, it will not have to remain more than about 15 or 20 minutes.

In the meanwhile the oven is to be heated, and this is much more than half the art of the operation. When an oven is properly heated, can be known only by actual observation. Women who understand the matter know when the heat is right the moment they put their faces within a yard of the oven-mouth; and once or twice observing is enough for any person of common capacity. But this much may be said in the way of rule, that the fuel (I am supposing a brick oven) should be dry (not rotten) wood, and not mere brushwood, but rather fagot-sticks. If larger wood, it ought to be split up into stocks not more than two, or two and a half inches through. Brushwood that is strong, not green and not too old, if it be hard in its nature and has some sticks in it, may do. The woody parts of furze, or ling will heat an oven very well. But the thing is, to have a lively and yet somewhat strong fire, so that the oven may be heated in about 15 minutes.

(Continued on page 8)

## Other Christ, Other Mary

ONCE upon a time there was a brilliant young priest, who was very handsome and beloved by everyone. He spoke much over the radio and his voice was very deep and beautiful and moved hearts. His writings were printed everywhere.

He often got discouraged because he was afraid people came to listen to him because they enjoyed it so much, and he was afraid, too, that he was only saving the saved. He wanted to reach "the workers." The Holy Father had said that the tragedy of this our day was that the workers of the world were lost to the Church. He wanted to reach these poor lost ones. He always envisaged them as marching with fists up-raised in May Day parades and thronging Madison Square Garden, and walking picket lines and swarming in and out of factories singing the Internationale. He talked of their misleaders, the Communists, in such terms that kindly old ladies left his lectures with faces pale with horror and wishing they could engage in battle against them. Actual physical battle. "Killing is too good for them!" Perhaps they were foreseeing the death and degradation of Mussolini and were longing for such "mass action" of the good against the bad. The same kind of mass action. God's will be done. Vengeance is mine, I will repay. How true!

The good young priest longed to stir and influence, these misled masses, not kindly old ladies and glowing young girls. Oh, to reach the poor, the worker!

Then a strike came that tied up industry and filled the streets with idle men, and the water-fronts with picketers. Goon squads and beef squads roamed the streets and violence was in the air.

The young priest was approached by some of the strikers and urged to use his influence to get them justice, but the young priest did not wish to deal with particular issues. Principles came first.

"There will be no Christian social order, until we have Christians," he said, sententiously.

"What do you mean—too many Jews?" one of the strikers bristled, thinking that he was being anti-Semitic.

"Until we get back to the principles of the Sermon on the Mount there will be no justice, no brotherly love," he answered with dignity.

No, he could not talk over the radio about the strike or the issues involved. He didn't know enough about it, he was a neutral. But he would come and give them a day of recollection, if they would just set the scene for it. Any time, just set the day.

The men looked taken aback, all but one who was a Holy Name man, and he dubiously promised to see what he could do about it. "Day of recollection." What in 'ell was that?

Down in a slum parish, in a dingy basement hall, some kindly ladies, interested in fighting communism, took over, and arranged meals for the day. The Holy Name man sweated over a circular, trying to translate "day of recollection" into terms understood by the common man, one of the masses. He got it out, and friends distributed thousands, and then the great day, a Saturday dawned. "To reach the masses."

The young priest had prepared himself with prayer, he had armed himself with spiritual weapons. He journeyed from a distant city where he taught and began the day of recollection with 9 o'clock Mass. There were a dozen or so parishioners present, that was all.

At the first conference, in the hall beneath the church, a dozen or so Holy Name men of the

parish had gathered. The young priest, who was used to talking to thousands, to thronged cathedrals, sweated openly. Was this a deliberate affront? Had no preparation been made? Was his generosity to go absolutely unrewarded?

It was the slowest day of his entire life. The group increased to fifty or so during the rest of the conferences. A few workers were undoubtedly there. Were they leaders or rank and file? Was he reaching them? Could they reach their fellows? Would any good ever come of it? A vast wave of depression and futility swept over him as he talked from a dry mouth. It was a hard day.

He heard a few confessions that night, and then he took the train back to his distant city and never heard from any of the group again.

He put the day out of his mind. It was a failure.

But Michael Watson, standing by the door with his cap in his hand, listening to some of the golden words falling from the lips of the young priest, found a light springing up in his heart.

It was a day in May, and outside it was sunny, and birds sang in the allanhus tree in the vacant lot. A song sparrow had flown in from the Jersey meadows and the piercing sweet notes mocked him as he dropped into church.

He had been looking for his old Mother, unfortunately often sodden in drink. Sometimes when he had hunted the taverns for her he found her instead kneeling in the back of the church, braced between seat and pew back, sleeping it off. She hadn't been there that day, but he had heard voices from the basement of the church and had gone down to hear the last of the conferences. And this one had been on the Blessed Mother.

In the sweetest words, and most tender tones, the young priest had described first the love of God, quoting St. Augustine:

"But what is it that I love when I love God? Not the beauty of any bodily thing, nor the order of seasons, nor the brightness of light that rejoices the eye, not the sweet melodies of all songs, nor the sweet fragrance of flowers and ointments and spices; not manna, nor honey, not the limbs that carnal love embraces. None of these things do I love in loving my God. Yet in a sense I do love light and melody and fragrance and food and embrace when I love my God. The light and the voice and the food and the fragrance and embrace in the soul, when that shines upon my soul which no place can contain, that voice sounds which no tongue can take from me, I breathe the fragrance which no wind scatters, I eat the food which is not lessened by eating, and I lie in the embrace which satiety never comes to sunder. This is that I love, when I love my God."

And he went on to talk of the Blessed Mother, and the love of the Blessed Mother, and how we were to see Christ our Brother in all men and Mary our Mother in all women.

"We are other-Christis," he cried out "other-Marys."

And Michael thought suddenly, (Continued on page 7)



## PERPETUA & FELICITAS



### From Little Children

Dear Friend: I am very happy to give this to you. I sacrificed going to the show three times to give this to you. Your friend,  
FLORENCE DEWIG.

Dear Friend: I'm Helen Sasse. of Neuburgh, Indiana, and we of the lay-apostolate were begging for the poor today and are giving up something very special to us. I'm giving you this dollar I earned sitting with babies while the mothers went shopping. Spend and enjoy it.

Yours in Christ,  
HELEN SASSE.

Elderbush Road.  
(With these notes came a package with groceries, rosaries, medals and \$7.61 from a number of contributors.)

## Dead Storage

(Continued from page 2)

no matter how close the relative.

Anyone who has ridden on the Long Island railroad out as far as Lake Ronkonkoma has seen these huge ghastly warehouses, reaching up to the sky out of the desolate wastes of pine lands, where men and women are confined to sit in rows along the wall, with nothing to do, to brood their lives away (or else, if they are energetic, made to work for years without pay in the kitchens or wards, doing hard work that attendants are paid to do).

We are happy to say that the unfortunate woman who had been suffering from the revenge of the anti-anti-Semite, who is just as virulent and venomous as the anti-Semite, and who by hatred increases that hatred, was rescued by her sister and released not only from the prison ward of the Bellevue psychiatric division but from Jefferson Market court, where the case against her was dropped.

Today, as I write this, I received a letter from Ossie Bondy, former head of the Windsor, Ontario, House of Hospitality, who is now in Belgium. He has been overseas since the war started, in the medical corps, and he promises to send us an article on the Gheel system of boarding out mental cases to private families. Having heard of this wonderful "decentralized" system of taking care of mental and nervous cases, we are most anxious to get an article on the subject, knowing well that if we publicize these ideas enough, many a life will be made happier thereby.

Busy Day.

## RETREATS FOR VETERANS

As the war progresses, an increasing diversity of its effects is becoming apparent. Some of them were not realized fully, if at all, by the growing number of soldiers, sailors and marines who are returning from far-flung battlefronts, wounded in body or mind.

Not a few of these men are being cared for in military or naval hospitals. Others are sent home for extended periods, while many have been honorably discharged from service. Having given their best to their country, they are endeavoring now to return to the degree of physical or mental health possible to them in individual circumstances.

Kathryn Close calls attention to one phase of the problem in an article published in "Survey Midmonthly," for November, 1944. In recent months, she reports, "Travelers of a new type have been stopping at the desks" of the Travelers Aid Societies, chiefly in railroad stations. These are the "ambulatory wounded," the men too badly hurt to keep fighting, but still able to move about.

The Travelers Aid representative is expected to render these men whatever incidental service she can. "However, in carrying out this responsibility," Miss Close notes, "she often gets quick glimpses of the emotional disturbances many of these men are carrying around with them. Some only indicate a pathetic desire to break away from their recent experiences. Such are the men back from the South Pacific, who timidly ask where they can find a restaurant with white tablecloths.

"Others are more visibly shaken, as was the young man, recently from Guadalcanal, who was afraid to go home to his family because he thought they might want him to talk about the horrors he had witnessed. More tragic still was the case of the sick soldier whose mind suddenly snapped in a railroad station, so that he had to be carried away in a straitjacket. Though the Travelers Aid units are not in a position to render returned soldiers more than transitory aid, they are beginning to see sufficient numbers of them to perceive a new need. This is the necessity for some kind of an educational program to carry to soldiers' families and friends an understanding of the difficulties these men will have in taking up life where they left off when interrupted by the war."

But there is an even more pressing need, left unmentioned

by the author of the article referred to, "America on the Move"—the necessity of rehabilitating these men who have returned to civilian life from the scenes of battle, and those who will return in days to come. How can they be helped to adjust themselves not merely to the environment from which they have been estranged, but particularly spiritually and emotionally and psychologically? Helped also to find a place in life and to make the transition from military to civilian careers with a composed mind and the strength needed to withstand the irritations of daily life?

While time alone can assuage the mental suffering of these men and blot out the memory of some of the horrible experiences they have undergone, there is an imperative need for an intelligent approach, especially to the initial stages of the transition. For the Catholic soldier or sailor probably no better counsel can be given than the making of a spiritual retreat as soon as possible after his discharge. The solitude, the curative properties of spiritual comfort, the sacraments and their soothing and restorative power will combine to give back to non-psychopathic casualties and veterans a proper perspective on life and things, will clear their minds of experiences and rash acts best forgotten. Above all, a retreat (made preferably in a suburban or rural area) will help them reach a balanced outlook on their military experiences, their present circumstances and the future.

The idea of promoting spiritual retreats for the men after their return to private life was first suggested by the Catholic Central Verein of America at its national convention held in New York in 1942. Regrettably, however, the plan has not been accorded the measure of support which it merits. Originally it was recommended that Catholic societies, working in conjunction with their pastors, should raise the necessary funds, arrange for the facilities (retreat house, retreat master, etc.), and contact the soldiers and sailors immediately upon their return. In the few instances where the plan has been adopted outstanding success has been reported.

An experienced Army chaplain, commenting on the idea several months ago, spoke of what it recommends as "one of the finest things that can be done for our Catholic soldiers; yet it seems to have taken a very long time to get the idea across. Frequently indeed has this valuable opportunity for Catholic Action been presented to various individuals and organizations, both of men and of women, but I have

watched in vain for a favorable response."

Let it be said that a retreat of the kind proposed is of infinitely greater value than any tonic intended to steady shattered nerves. Promotion of retreats for ex-service men is a work of charity of the kind of which it is said: charity to the soul is the soul of charity.

C. V. Service.

### From a Mother—and Her Son

San Rafael, Calif.,  
Nov. 2, 1944.

Dear Editor:

A hearty welcome back to your field of labor in God's vineyard! May He bless you a hundred-fold!

It seems to me this last issue of the Catholic Worker is the best ever. And only you and your staff know of the trials you have in getting it to the readers. Again, may God bless you all!

I agree—with all my strength—with your printed views on this terrible war. I have three stalwart sons in the service, and surely did not go through all the travail just to have them exploited by greedy war lords. My youngest son is in China, my eldest in the Pacific Ocean area—we deduce he is in the Philippines. (I shall enclose a copy of his last letter written while at sea). I think you may be interested in his report of Mass on board an Army ship.

The wee check enclosed may help a mite toward the C. W.

With sincere appreciation of your efforts,

Yours earnestly,

(Mrs.) A. R.  
On the Pacific,  
Oct. 7, 1944.

Dear Mother:—

It was a gala day for me today. I had twenty letters, including yours of the 6th and 8th Sept. It appears that just about all the missing links have been accounted for now, for which I am thankful. It was quite annoying to receive recent letters which referred to previous ones which I had not received.

Also among my letters was one from Al, dated Aug. 29. (This son is in China with the A.A.F.) However, I have had much more recent news of him through you. His letters must travel a strange route to reach me because it had gone through San Francisco A.P.O.

I thought you might be interested in the religious situation aboard my ship. Unfortunately there is not a Catholic chaplain with us—a condition that is bound to occur at times. There

## SAINT JEROME



is a very fine Protestant chaplain—a big strapping, intelligent fellow. But of course he can't do us much good.

Every Sunday while the Protestants are holding services on the fore deck, the Catholics gather at the stern and read the Mass aloud. Every evening there is rosary and litany. Both services are conducted by a young marine whom I do not know. He sounds like he is from New York.

At the first opportunity, two Catholic chaplains came aboard—it was ten o'clock on a Tuesday morning, I think. One was a lieutenant colonel—the fighting Irish type with beetling brows and a bull-dog jaw. He could just as well have passed for a San Francisco police captain. The other priest was a mild-mannered reserved lieutenant.

Then religion was stripped down to the bare essentials. Everyone somehow crowded into the mess hall in which a crude altar had been placed. It was stifling hot and everyone was soaked. Each of the chaplains took chairs with their backs to the congregation and began to hear confessions. When it began to look like things were going to interfere with the noon-day mess, the lieutenant started to read the Mass, and the lieutenant colonel leaned against the wall and continued hearing confessions. The poor man who was saying Mass with his vestments over his uniform dripped perspiration from every pore; but of course could do little about it. There was a large wet spot on the altar cloth. I thought that they should train altar boys to do for the priest what a nurse does for a surgeon and wipe his brow at frequent intervals.

It seemed to me that everyone received Holy Communion. The priest was so uncomfortable and nervous from the heat that he dropped a host on the deck. When some later communicant noted the cloth that the priest had covered the spot with and made a motion to pick it up, the priest forgot himself for an instant and shouted, Jehovah-like, "Let that be!"

(You probably know that men overseas may receive Holy Communion at any time, even immediately after a meal.) After our two "soul-savers" left, it was announced that they were quite edified by the turnout on our ship. It seems to me they performed a reasonably permanent job—under present circumstances, it would be most difficult to fall from grace. With this I'll end my long story.

YOUR WANDERING SON.

## THERE WAITS A CHILD

By Marie Conti Oreste

ACROSS the land the children sit AND when the battle lights the screen  
With witched eyes in the show, They raise a happy cry;  
On Saturdays they crowd the doors They see the bayonets spurt, and  
And wait in line to go. laugh  
To see the enemy die.

ACROSS the land there waits a Child

In vain at His low door

Where none are foes and life is love

And none wage hate and war.





# May Day and Boston Common

By ARTHUR SHEEHAN

**M**AY Day and Boston Common were almost synonymous to us in Boston. It was to that famous place, where free speech held sway, that we would go in a special way on this day to meet and debate with the Commies, the Socialists and the other debaters of every political, economic, religious and anti-religious hue.

That was in the years 1937 to 1940.

Many of the men listening to the various economic solutions offered on the Common would go from that place in the late afternoon to a nearby hotel where they would line up for dishwashing jobs. They would get a few hours' work cleaning up after the 1500-person banquets at the hotel. It was often their only chance to earn a few dollars in those dire depression days.

The men would get a good meal, and this was not to be sneezed at in those days of elusive food. For this they were grateful, but it was galling to see huge quantities of food dumped into garbage barrels after these banquets when so many were on the verge of starvation. We saw with our own eyes eleven barrels of excellent food going into cans after one banquet.

Occasionally some of the men would steal—if you could call it stealing—some of the food and take it out for a later meal. Sometimes, a more humane sub-official would give out odd bits of delicacy, butter for instance. The iron rule usually was that no food was to be taken outside of the hotel, not even for the poor.

In 1937 the depression was still severe, although not as bad as it had been a few years previously when many men slept for months on Boston Common, shaved in the morning in the egg pond, using the water as a mirror. Many often passed a cold and miserable night on one of the tombs of Boston's illustrious dead.

We had seen men creeping out of subways and slinking around corners at 6:30 in the morning, converging on a spot on the Common where two employees of the Mayflower Baking Company would bring out two garbage cans of doughnuts and dump them. It was a wolf-pack scene, and out of the scramble a man might get three doughnuts, if he was lucky.

It was against this background that men would listen to the apostles of red revolution and were almost ripe—it seemed—for the fatal doctrine.

The Commies offered revolution by violence, the Socialists by ballot, and our group was humbly offering a personalist solution of houses of hospitality to be followed up by farming communities and cooperatives.

Peter Maurin would come to Boston, and each time he would go to the Common and address the groups there. We have seen him hold a crowd for five hours on a hot summer day. He would be speaking on the land as a way out of our industrial difficulties. Education, too, would come in for a lengthy going over, and on this subject Peter was always at his best. After five hours, the crowd still didn't want to break up and individuals kept button-holing him, asking questions. The rest of the Catholic Worker crowd didn't have Peter's iron resistance, and they were feeling the pangs of hunger, longing for a sight of the House of Hospitality table.

In those days under John Magee's direction, many thousands

of copies of the CATHOLIC WORKER would be distributed each month, mostly at church doors.

The rent at the house was \$30 a month, and that seemed a lot, particularly when you had to try to feed the 500 and more who came for food each day. Miss Marra managed the house for a while and did an excellent job. She passed the task over to John



Magee when John put his whole time into the work. Then later, when John had started the farm group, she came back for a time to run the place again.

The Catholic Worker group was farm-minded and since we were propagandizing for a return to the land it seemed logical to do something about it. John Magee and others looked over almost fifty farms and by April were still unsuccessful. He wrote in that month to the CATHOLIC WORKER that he was looking to the Blessed Virgin to come through with the right farm. She did. On the eve of her day, May Day, that is on April 30th, 1938, a farm was obtained and \$50 was paid down to clinch the deal.

The total cost of the farm was \$1,500 and this was to be paid in installments of \$400 each. An appeal was sent out and the first amount raised. Then a student at Harvard, a Belgian exchange scholar, loaned us his \$400 of tuition money for the following year and we paid it back over the year—that is, all but \$60. He went back to Belgium and didn't leave us a forwarding address.

The farm occupied more and more of our attention now, but when we did get in to town we would occasionally visit the Common and renew acquaintanceships and gently try to cultivate curiosity about the farm in the minds of the orators there.

The farm plan was to get families to take five acres apiece and to have at least twenty-eight acres for community crops. There is nothing so instructive as an object lesson, as any good teacher will tell you, and the farm was our object lesson in which we were trying to demonstrate the benefits of a back-to-the-land movement. Visitors poured in, and we encouraged them even if work suffered.

The Worcester group started its House of Hospitality some time afterward, and helped magnificently with furniture, money and food to carry us over

the lean days until crops should give us a return.

Monsignor Ligutti came, looked over the farm, told us we could support a hundred persons on it and advised raising sheep.

Meetings were held, and at these Ade de Bethune, Graham Carey, Father Joseph Woods, O.S.B., and others would come and address groups as large as 150 persons. There would be a general picnic atmosphere and much discussion.

Eight men spent the first summer at the farm. "Silence" MacDonald was the real leader. He was an excellent farmer and had come from that home of excellent farmers, Prince Edward Island. Under his direction large crops were put in.

The hurricane came and all the buildings except the main house were blown down. The men started to rebuild and in a few months a chicken house, a small barn, pig pen and a cow shed were up in the place of the old structures.

No one had been hurt beyond a few scratches. No animals died. All the men had taken refuge at the height of the hundred-mile gale in an old ambulance which we had purchased for \$56 from the Army Quartermaster's Corps in South Boston.

In 1939 the crowd of men at the farm had increased and we had then a married couple living with us, John and Gella Curran. Here is a description of the farm as we penned it for the CATHOLIC WORKER at that time:

"Bill Sheehan is cooking, Henry Morgan is harrowing in the fields. Missouri comes in to get some chicken feed. Dave is building—always something useful.

"Hazen is doing the dozen and one things necessary and Bill Roche is pruning trees. John Kelley is digging a cistern while Parks is quoting Shakespeare, spraying a little culture on us.

"On the woodpile, John Curran and Norman are sawing and philosophizing. . . .

"Soup is on. A bell rings. Two tables of hungry people. One can truly now understand the sentence, 'We knew Him in the breaking of the bread.'

"Some new faces are always joining us. New thoughts, new ideas, and to those with the eyes to see, new wonders in this visible manifestation of the Mystical Body of Christ in action."

The faces have changed at Upton but the community has gone on. Families have built their homes and are slowly establishing themselves.

The experiment may seem to be a far cry from Boston Common with its talk so often praising the industrial system and the "wonders" of city life but in reality, we think, there is a closer connection than one might at first believe between the two places.

Boston Common was donated to the City of Boston for the use of the people so that they might have a place to meet and discuss their affairs, where they might even bring a cow and pasture it one day a year. It was called the Common after the English commons, a reminder of the common lands of England of the Middle Ages when certain ground near a tyne or town was held in common and all might bring their sheep and cattle there to graze or might plant if they needed land.

One should pray in the way he likes best. This makes prayer sincere and pleasing to God.

The wisest wisdom in the world is the wisdom that comes from suffering.

## COLOGNE

(Continued from page 4)

ations it took to build that structure. These facts could be easily obtained at any public library. But they would prove nothing except that the building was quite old and took quite a while to finish. The name of the master planner (if any one man were responsible for the magnificent architecture) is also immaterial, although it probably is available. Such things are always available in history books or encyclopedias. But they are not always important.

The important item in this case is the fact that men—generations of men—were sufficiently inspired to undertake, plan, dream and build, and pray, until they had created an edifice suitable to the honoring of their God, worthy of expressing a faith that enabled them to challenge a span of years beyond their individual lifetimes. To those of us who felt joy in hearing that their work still stands, it didn't matter too much (if it occurred to us at all to remember the fact) that these men who built were of the barbarian, war-creating strain of mankind, the Teutonic monster whose sole aim on earth (we are told by all the better minds of our day) is to crush the innocent and destroy the righteous. We probably forgot also that these very men whose lives were dedicated to the work our men so considerably spared lived in some of those very same dwellings, walked the very same streets that did not fare so well.

The importance of the cathedral lay not in the fact that it was built, but, rather, in why it was built. Just so, we must not place our emphasis on the fact that it stands; instead, we must consider what it stands for.

Whoever had the desire to undertake so great an effort must have had a mighty faith; and the



men who struggled to achieve his goal shared that same faith. No tyrant could have driven men to create so enduring a monument to life. These men of faith were content to add their part to a work they would never see in its completed glory because they knew that what they were expressing could never die. And so they toiled and died, and their sons and their descendants followed the same pattern of life until finally the cathedral stood, not as a mound of stone honoring some departed hero but as a work of faith to house the presence of a Living God—a God whose message was eternal love and who poured forth His love in agony, who in that agony suffered even this day when man would reject Him, when man would return ten

Colognes for the evil of one Coventry in His Name.

For remember we must that their present-day descendants who also worshipped in the cathedral, lived in the ancient dwellings and walked the ancient streets—these "hateful barbarians," these "murdering, plundering" brothers in the Mystical Body of Christ to our gallant, crusading defenders who flew above their city and so artfully and accurately snuffed out its life, share with us the heritage of Calvary's sorrow and glory and carrying the obligation to forgive us these trespasses as we might have forgiven them for trespassing against us.

The miracle of faith that built the cathedral marked the contribution of its builders to the ages. This generation has scarred its monuments into the face of the earth in a never-increasing crescendo from blockbusters to town-busters—and eventually, we may suppose, to worldbusters. Where they left a miracle of construction, we have accomplished a miracle of destruction. The two have met at Cologne. The cathedral that towers over a sea of rubble and ruin is, as the papers say, structurally intact. It is for us now to determine whether it is still intact in the spirit that gave it substance—if the faith of the Christians of today is strong enough to overcome the fury of the prides and hatreds and vengeance they have created and bring all men to their knees in an international prayer for forgiveness.

If we fail in this, if we refuse to accept the cross of responsibility for a peace based on justice, forgiveness and love, we shall have lost our chance to bring about the kind of world toward which these men of ages past were building. And then, perhaps, it might have been just as well had some bombardier done by accident what we will have done by intentional neglect . . . reduce the Cologne cathedral structure to what it actually is, a pile of old stones.

Gordon Zahn.

## The New Order

"The New Order would not be such a fearsome thing if the parish could enjoy the daily sight of Father Hopkins, trudging in his trench boots and a pipe in his mouth, to his field, there to rear the wherewithal for his dinner and supper—a glorious realization of the dignity of labor at the hands of the holiest in the land. Don't tell me that Father Hopkins would have to neglect his accounts, for there would be few accounts to keep, and possibly no collections to make, if Father Hopkins could provide for himself: or he could let the faithful keep his accounts while he keeps their faith." — (Holy Roodlets, Watford, England.)

## Other Christ

(Continued from page 5)

"This then is faith, to see Christ where He is hid, and Mary, my mother, too. And where can she be more hid than in this old woman I call my natural mother, who steals my clothes for drink, and causes me such pain unutterable?"

And he wandered out into the spring sunshine, staggering as though with a bright light and his heart warm with love of God, and love of Mary, and love of the dirty old shabby woman he found not long after mumbling on their doorstep.

"Other-Mary," he said tenderly, as he helped her into the house.



# THE LAND

## Grail Schools of Apostolate

**"THE Task of Young Women in the Era to Come"** is the challenging theme of the Grail Schools of Apostolate which will be held in this coming summer from June until October under the auspices of the Bishops in the different dioceses throughout the country: Cincinnati, Ohio; Fargo, North Dakota; Richmond, Virginia; Hartford, Connecticut; New York City, New York; Toledo, Ohio, and St. Paul, Minnesota.

### Purpose of the Schools of Apostolate

The Grail schools are intensive periods of formation for positive Christian action. Their purpose is to prepare young women all over America as great-hearted women, radiant Christians, and generous apostles, to enable them to meet the profound universal problems of our time, and to contribute in their specific capacity as women, in an organized apostolate under the leadership of the hierarchy, towards a Christian future.

Each of the schools lasts for a full week. The program is based upon a pattern of integral Christian living with active participation in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the prayer of the Church; with lectures and discussions; serious study of the Christian scholars and writers; definite periods of meditation and silence; a variety of manual work; creative recreation, feasting in the spirit of the Church, and individual and collective planning for the future.

### Program Offers Wide Scope

During the courses the following fundamental concepts will be developed: **The Lay Apostolate**, the universal movement of the laity under the hierarchy, methods and techniques for lay action in individual milieu and in society at large; **World Problems**, the crisis of western civilization, the disintegration of marriage and family life, the degradation of the ideals and place of womanhood in society, individualism and the loss of the community spirit, the social question of racial relations, and the decline of agriculture as a way of life. **Woman**, the nature and psychology of woman, the particular approach of woman to the lay apostolate. **Christian culture**, the building of a wholesome American culture rooted in Christianity, the use of modern techniques of communication, motion pictures, the radio, the press, as mediums of world influence.

### Advanced Schools at Grailville

In addition to the one-week courses throughout the country, "Woman and the New Era," a three months' school, will be conducted at Grailville, Loveland, Ohio, from June 12 to September 18, giving a basic

preparation for organized work in individual surroundings. From October 9, 1945, to October 1, 1946, "Metanoia," a complete year's school of leadership, will be given, offering a serious program of thorough formation for leadership in the lay apostolate. These schools, as well as the entire program at Grailville, are conducted under the patronage of the Most Reverend John T. McNicholas, Archbishop of Cincinnati.

### The Summer Schedule

The dates and plans of the courses are as follows: June 12 to June 19, "The Eternal Woman," Grailville, Loveland, Ohio; June 29 to July 6, "The Good Ground," Devil's Lake, North Dakota; July 2 to July 9, "Built on a Rock," Bristow, Virginia; July 17 to July 23, "The Party of the Spindle," Brookfield Center, Connecticut; July 24 to July 29, "The Unfinished World," Grailville, Loveland, Ohio; August 3 to August 10, "Upon the Housetops," Holy Child Academy, Suffern, New York; August 27 to September 2, "The Grain of Wheat," Carey, Ohio; September 11 to September 18, "Sowers of the Seed," Grailville, Loveland, Ohio.

At Grailville, there will be an additional program including the following short courses on all phases of a Christian restoration: June 22 to June 24, "The Global Mind," a world view of the Church by the Very Reverend Edward F. Freking of the National Catholic Students Mission Crusade; June 29 to July 1, "With Harp and Lute," a special study of the foundations of a Christian culture with emphasis on folk music and folk dancing; July 13 to July 15, "Modern Prophets," the message of the great Christian writers and the application of their ideas to the modern crisis; August 17 to August 19, "The Song of the Pilgrim," a joyous experience of Gregorian Chant as the living voice of Christian worship; August 31 to September 2, "The Wisdom of the People," the study of folklore and literature in relation to the development of a Christian culture.

The Grail Schools of Apostolate are open to all young women between the ages of 16 and 24. For further information write to: Grailville, Loveland, Ohio.

The Cross is our spiritual mirror.

Love consists not in getting but in giving; not in pleasure but in sacrifice.

St. Augustine: "I searched for God without, but found Him within."

## Making Bread

(Continued from page 5)

utes, and retain its heat sufficiently long.

The oven should be hot by the time that the dough, as mentioned in Paragraph 103 has remained in the lump about 20 minutes. When both are ready, take out the fire, and wipe the oven out clean, and, at nearly about the same moment, take the dough out upon the lid of the baking trough, or some proper place, cut it up into pieces, and make it up into loaves, kneading it again into the separate parcels; and as you go on, shaking a little flour over your board, to prevent the dough from adhering to it. The loaves should be put into the oven as quickly as possible after they are formed; when in, the oven lid or door should be fastened up very closely; and, if all be properly managed, loaves of about the size of quarter loaves will be sufficiently baked in about two hours. But they usually take down the lid and look at the bread, in order to see how it is going on.

And what is there worthy of the name of plague or trouble in all this? Here is no dirt, no filth, no rubbish, no litter, no slop, and pray, what can be pleasanter to behold? Talk indeed of your pantomimes and gaudy shows, your processions and installations and coronation! Give me for a beautiful sight, a neat and smart woman, heating her oven and setting her bread, and if the bustle does make the sign of labor glisten on her brow, where is the man that would not kiss that off, rather than lick the plaster from the cheek of a duchess?

And what is the result? Why, good, wholesome food, sufficient for a considerable family for a week, prepared in three or four hours. To get the quantity of food, fit to be eaten, in the shape of potatoes, how many fires—what a washing, what a boiling, what a peeling, what a slopping, and what a messing. The cottage everlasting in a litter, the woman's hands everlastingly wet and dirty; the children grimed up to the eyes with dust fixed on by potato starch, and ragged as colts, the poor mother's time all being devoted to the everlasting boiling of the pot. Can any man, who knows anything of the laborer's life, deny this—and will, then, anybody, except the old shuffle-breeches band of the Quarterly Review, who have all their lives been moving from garret to garret, who have seldom seen the sun, and never the dew except in print; will anybody, except these men say that the people ought to be taught to use potatoes as a substitute for bread?

## Infant Cremation

Last week a pamphlet entitled "War Mongering" (by Fr. Gerald Vann, O.P.) came to the CATHOLIC WORKER from England. In it a British officer was quoted as asking the question: What is the difference between throwing babies in a fire and throwing fire on babies? Apparently to many people that depends on whose babies they are and whose fire it is.

## Cleaning House

By CATHERINE DE HUECK

**T**HE Sunday paper is full of ads about materials and short cuts for spring cleaning. Through the open window I can hear, above the noises of the traffic and the hum of conversations, two birds shrilly quarreling. And the nasturtiums I planted two weeks ago in the windowboxes are coming up. Definitely spring IS here.

But I am far away, the paper lying at my feet unheeded, the sound of traffic, the medley of human voices, the quarreling birds barely reaching my consciousness. Again I have journeyed into my yesterdays, into my distant childhood far away in Russia, back into that special, very special week when we cleaned house.

There were few short cuts to the work at hand in those days, and if there had been any, I wonder if they would have been easily accepted. For we looked on work as a hallowed occupation, blessed by the centuries, to be started in God, for God, with a prayer. For wasn't the home the symbol of Christ and His Church, and the cleaning thereof something holy—to be done according to customs that, perhaps unconsciously, took the place of rubrics?

Also it was fun. For we made most of our cleaning materials ourselves. And the preparations for that important week started almost a year ahead. Of course, there first had to be a survey. For in all things of life, the Russian housewife believed, there must be order, the tranquillity of order. So with a paper and a pencil each room would be gone over, and the work to be done noted down and divided by the days at hand. Laundering, dyeing, scrubbing, washing, polishing, airing—all had their turn, their proper placing, and making ready for each was a task apart.

For instance, there was the question of curtains. Everyone knows these fade through the year. So they had to be re-dyed. And that would bring us to the summer of the last year. To the gathering of flowers and roots, to the making of vegetable dyes. What fun it used to be!

**U**P WITH sunrise, a hot full breakfast, everyone gathering with baskets and linen bags ready for the day. Mother reciting a prayer to St. Martha, the patron saint of the home, and off we would go, several miles down the road into the fields and forests that had the precious plants needed for the day's work.

I always chose the collecting of cornflowers, for I loved to walk through the golden wheat fields where they made their home. There they were, vividly blue, beckoning to me here, there, and everywhere. A pity that they had to be squeezed into a linen bag that hung over my shoulder, but still fun to gather them. They give such a lovely shade of blue to the materials dyed. I have never found that exact shade since. Somehow it always made me think of our Lady's gown. I wager it was just that beautiful soft shade of cornflower blue.

To get it, we used to put the cornflowers into gallon bottles filled with alcohol, and let them stand until almost spring in the sunniest window of the house. Some other flowers and roots we mashed and boiled, filtering the coloring into dark brown slender bottles for next spring's need. The New York Public Library has a little book on vegetable dyes that positively has the ability to make me homesick for my yesterdays.

Then there was the brass and copper to clean. All kitchen utensils were made of those in my young days and that meant polishing, and then some. But what

a beautiful, gorgeous sight, a spotless kitchen with shelves upon shelves of gleaming brass and copper! Frankly, I never saw "brasso" until I came to America, and yet I have cleaned positively thousands of pots and pans in my young life. We used bread, ordinary rye bread. Gathering the left-overs, the crusts, we soaked them in a little water, allowing them to become sour and ferment. With that mush we cleaned the copper and the brass. And does it clean? Boy, it sure does!

**F**OR all the endless washing and scrubbing that Russian housewives love so, one needs pounds and pounds of soap. We made our own, naturally. So there was the collection of fats and the boiling of it with lye. To me every step in the art of making soap was fun. St. Martha was there, of course. You brought her there with a little prayer, and if you forgot, that was just too bad: the soap would be too dry, or too soft, as sure as you were alive. Only those who have made soap know the joy of cutting into the tidy soft large squares of it and putting the cakes into the sun to dry.

Floors were polished with wax. Hard floors, that is. We had our own beehives, and therefore our own wax for floors, for candles and vigil lights. Mother used to make these. And the special prayers that go with each were beautiful but hard to translate. Waxmaking started, as all works did, with the sign of the cross. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The soft white pine floors were scrubbed, not with a floor brush, but with brooms made out of birch branches gathered the year before and dried in the barn, some leaves still clinging to them and smelling sweet and green when immersed in hot water. They make a grand "brush" to scrub floors with, with the home-made soap and the yellow clean sand. The floors came out dazzling white.

The mending and sewing was, of course, part of spring cleaning. I loved the sewing room much, with its big ikon of our Blessed Mother of Kazan, before which burned an extra big vigil light, *lampada*. With its two Singer sewing machines, its long cutting tables, and its ceiling filled with rafters from which hung in orderly rows, linen threads made of our own flax and dyed with our own dyes, and long skeins of wool from our own sheep, also dyed at home.

Yes, the preparations for spring cleaning were begun a year ahead. And after it was all over each room would be sprinkled again with holy water, and we would all go to the steam bath, and wash thoroughly, then go to Confession and Communion, returning home to a breakfast of tea with thick cream and freshly made buns with new raspberry jam.

I pick up the paper lying at my feet. How varied are the short cuts and cleansing materials offered. How varied and how dull!



DANDELION