

CATHOLIC WORKER

Vol. XVI. No. 11

April, 1950

Subscription:
25c Per Year

Price 1c

Expropriation or Restitution Action for Holy Year

Early last month, on the hillside of Calabria in South Italy, "Christian Democratic peasant organizations marched side by side with Communist groups to take over the land. In some cases, Catholic priests led the marchers. Said a leader of the Christian Democrats, 'Hunger and misery have wiped out political differences.'" (N. Y. Times, 3-5-50.)

In the Fucino district, Prince Torlonia, absentee landlord, resident at Rome, aged twenty-four, owns by inheritance sixty square miles of land, which is patrolled by his own blue-coated police. The one hundred and twenty thousand poverty-stricken people of the valley are "legally" free, as free as you can be when you owe your master eight hundred thousand dollars, and he owns the bank. "At least one priest who is giving a bread dole to the valley's poor insists . . . that the time has come for expropriation." (N. Y. Herald Tribune, 3-18-50.)

Part of what the valley knows of Christianity and democracy they found out during the war, when Allied bombers destroyed their main town of Avezzano. They knew that the fruits of Fascism were bitter, but were they to account as love, bombs rained on their innocent?

And now the troops have been called out to put down a general strike of workers and peasants all over Italy. At least two workers were killed, and seven thousand were arrested. They asked for bread, and they gave them a bayonet; that is an old police story. It is true that Rome has told the police to keep order without violence in the peasant seizures, and there are some evidences that the government is inching its way along the pathway of social justice. But it's the old story of too little and too late.

Patience of the Poor

For two years now the people have been patient, as only a peasant and a worker know how to be patient, waiting for the de Gasperi government to fulfill its promises in the 1948 election. They have seen at least that political action, too, is the tool of the owners. The

(Continued on page 8)

The City in Hiding

By JOHN McKEON

It had been raining intermittently all that day, a thin grey mournful drizzle, and the car slipped greasily along the asphalt road that ran like a slick black thread through the recurring needle's eye of low mountain passes. Every now and again to our right we could glimpse the flat steel sheen of the river through the trees: broad, placid and swollen with melted ice from the mountains to the north. When our course ran close to the over-jutting rock faces the air would have an almost liquid chill to it and there would be a few scattered rags of snow along the roadside, like dustcloths casually dropped by a slatternly housewife, but out on the flat the wind had a wet sweet promise of spring that modified its bite.

Father Sullivan was driving and had been talking steadily since the two of us had left the city behind that morning. He was a small dark man, close coupled and neatly made as a jockey with blue eyes that startled you looking out of a swarthy Gaiway face. He looked a bit like a jockey too, wearing a blue turtle necked sweater and perched up on the seat, leaning forward like he was riding a hunter in a point to point race, though

his hands on the wheel of the ancient Buick, tense, hard and strained, would have ruined the mouth of a dray horse. He had been staying at Maryfarm with us for a month past and his passions were work and conversation. It was a toss-up which he had the greater capacity for. He was the same age as ourself and had managed to jam a great deal of travel and activity into his life and had a great fund of good stories from his travels that he could tell, on occasion, with good point and economy, but like all good story tellers yielding the floor was a torture to him and he could, I imagine, bear the rack better than he could someone cutting across the thread of his conversation. As Father Foley, our chaplain said of him. "He's a man that can refresh you in the process of ex-

(Continued on page 3)

S.O.S.

We are now the dispossessed. At this moment of going to press notice comes to the print shop that St. Joseph's House and the headquarters of The Catholic Worker has been sold and we are ordered to move by July first. Where can we find another house to care for the destitute ones who come to us, where we can cook for the five hundred a day who wait in front for meals? This, then, is perfect joy, as St. Francis of Assisi said. We write so much about the d.p.'s, the landless, the homeless, poverty without tears, and here is a little of it! We beg your help now, for ourselves.



Poverty Without Tears

By DOROTHY DAY

Poverty is the name of a book issued this spring by Sheed and Ward. It is written by a French Dominican and translated by Rosemary Sheed. It costs \$2.50 but it would be no violation of voluntary poverty to buy it because it can be considered a tool, a means, to work out your salvation.

The Rich and Poor in Christian Tradition, the writings of many centuries, chosen, translated and

introduced by Walter Shewring, and published by Burnes Oates and Washbourne in England, in remembrance of Eric Gill who also wrote on Poverty, is another book which also belongs on every lay apostle's shelf. Wherever you turn in this book there are writings that make you groan to think how little is written today concerning the needy and the poor. This book should be a constant companion like the Bible, the missal, for in it are the writings of the Fathers of the Church. In it is the secret of sanctity.

The Poor and Ourselves by Daniel Rops, is another book which should be mentioned here,

although it is out of print and hard to find. But in it he talks of the destitute and that wall that exists between the rich, the poor, and the destitute that can only be bridged by love and bread and not by any words.

The Shewring book is one to be quoted from at length and reprinted bit by bit, to make our readers familiar with the writings of the

(Continued on page 3)

Government and A&P— Story of a Conflict

By IRENE NAUGHTON

In the motion picture, "Death Takes a Holiday," there is a scene where Death, which is pictured as a person visiting the world, reaches out to touch a rose, and before our sight, the rose slowly withers and dies. The great industrial empire, the A&P, in the ninety years of its existence, has spread out like a slow blight into all the corners of this country, into fishing and canning operations in the Pacific Northwest, into the apple orchards of California, the date orchards of Arizona, like quack grass strangling everything good, down into the miserable workers on the coffee plantations in Brazil, like

a giant octopus squeezing out the breath of its victims.

Because of a way of doing business of which the A&P is an outstanding representative, men whose grandfathers, and even their fathers, were free men upon their own land, are now impoverished sharecroppers, or fruit tramps who follow the harvest about the country, dragging themselves and their families from leaky shack to muddy ditch or "hygienic" barracks, their babies born by the side of the road, and their premature dead buried there. Because of this way of doing business, men who wished to fulfill the early American ideal of many owners rather than a few have become clerks and yes-men, and been forced into dishonesty, and many into slow alcoholic death. Because of this way of doing business, the price of food has been jacked up all over the country, even though the A&P keeps always a little under the jack that the A&P itself operates, until the housewife is hard put to it, trying to get three meals out of money that is losing its value.

And yet I doubt if there is anyone who believes the A&P's self-praising ads more than the housewife and the worker, those ads where the A&P calls itself the friend of the housewife, the friend of labor, the friend of the farmer.

A&P's First Lie

The government is not out to put the A&P out of business. NOT ONE A&P STORE WILL BE CLOSED IF THE GOVERNMENT

(Continued on page 6)

Migrant Workers Starve

R. 3, Box 227, Phoenix, Arizona.

Dear Friends:

As to the starving children it is not an exaggeration. Now that there has been the publicity the Red Cross is there, barbers have offered free haircuts; the county hired a Dr. by the month to attend to them—especially. I have worked all around that camp and with the people. All little corner stores have slot machines and charge awful prices. The big companies import Mexican labor which is steady and of course much cheaper. All authorities deny this and say that only Nationals come when no local help can be gotten. But we all know that is a lie. Right now they are irrigating the field, next to me. (I never got an answer about that 10c. an hour paid to labor here.)

Between Christmas and about April first there is only irrigating and tractor work in the fields. Many families have no home to go to so they stay in these camps and wait until time comes to hoe cotton and cantaloupes. The lady storekeeper at this camp said she advanced \$300 credit to some in the camp—that could easily be but it would be only a drop in the bucket. The camp manager should have reported the mess but said nothing. I have a preacher friend who has a church there who goes around in a shiny new Ford, exchanges pulpits with a Negro preacher in town and is really a nice fellow—but people starved to death under his nose. All these folks make good money when they do work but spend it for tin cans out of the stores and are broke in a few days. If we could only get a praying Catholic to give full time to a CW house in Phoenix and with side trips to these four camps in the valley, Joe and I could raise plenty for feed, a lot on land we could get free from people. Can't even get anyone else to sell CW's so we non-Catholic anarchists have to do it.

To sum it up Mexican Nationals brought in by big companies is the main fault. Next comes uncertainty of crop sale which rushes hell out of everyone. Next the lack of home vegetable gardens or really any home life at all as more and more big companies grab the land

AMMON HENNACY.

ANARCHISM— GRACE AND NATURE

By ROBERT LUDLOW

A friend of ours, who is also a critic of the idea of Christian anarchism, writes: "You cannot expect those who cannot live the supernatural life of the Christian community, either because they are not members of the community or because they are not living members, to put into effect in public life the principles of the Gospel."

Let us get again just what is meant by anarchism generally. Kropotkin defines it as "the doctrine which seeks to abolish the oppressive centralized organization of the State whose historical mission always was to protect and maintain the exploitation of man by man."

Father Luigi Sturzo writes: "the State, as a fact of government and responsibility, is the ruling class

(Continued on page 5)

CATHOLIC WORKER

Published Monthly September to June, Bi-monthly July-August
(Member of Catholic Press Association)
ORGAN OF THE CATHOLIC WORKER MOVEMENT
PETER MAURIN, Founder

Associate Editors:
ROBERT LUDLOW, IRENE NAUGHTON, TOM SULLIVAN
Managing Editor and Publisher: DOROTHY DAY
115 Mott St., New York City—13
Telephone: CANal 6-8498

Subscription, United States, 25c Yearly. Canada and Foreign, 30c Yearly
Subscription rate of one cent per copy plus postage applies to bundles of one hundred or more copies sent for one year to be directed to one address

Reentered as second class matter August 10, 1939, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., Under the Act of March 3, 1879



Easter Greetings

Tom Sullivan, who is sick this month and cannot write his column, reminds us that in all the back issues of *The Catholic Worker* we have celebrated Christmas joyfully and Lent prayerfully, but that we have not paid enough written attention to Easter, the greatest feast of the year. We have a picture for Palm Sunday which expresses the triumph of Christ, and no picture of the risen Christ. So here we joyfully greet the recurrence again of this great and glorious feast of the Church, which annually renews our hope and makes us realize that we are not living in time but in eternity, and that no matter how fearful a condition all the world may seem to be in, Nature itself rejoices and the dead trees put forth their buds again, and the lilies nudge their way out of the ground and the birds return from the south and awaken us every morning with their song. Even on our fire escapes on Mott street the sparrows are more lively in their chirping. Holy Mother the Church in her anxiety for us to rejoice even indulgently pushes the feast ahead a little, so that on Holy Saturday, first thing in the morning, after the sad and sorrowful days of Christ's dying and lying in the tomb are passed, the bells ring out, the flowers bloom on the altar, the organ is played and the statues of our friends the saints are again uncovered, and our Lord shines forth in all his glory, triumphant on his Cross as on a throne.

The joyful Masses continue, through Easter Sunday, through the holy week afterward, right through for forty days until the Ascension into Heaven. When Jesus Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene in the garden, she saw only the gardener until he spoke to her, and when he appeared to the disciples on the road to Emmaus, they did not know him until they broke bread with him. It seems to me He left us a very sure directive that we would find Him everywhere, in our fellow workers, in all our daily encounters. We are to know Him daily in the breaking of bread with all those on our breadline, with all those who come to live with us in our houses. If we suffer with Him, we will rejoice with Him, and the two go together. Christ is risen, as He said. Alleluia! A Happy Easter to all our readers!

Time Marches Back

The March 6th issue of *TIME* magazine carried a story headed *MORAL ABSENTEES* which is quite typical of the inaccuracy and distortion of the press in this country. Here we have the case of an individual priest, a Jesuit, writing an article in the Jesuit publication *CIVILTA' CATTOLICA*, in which he attacks the position of conscientious objectors. It represents the opinion of one theologian. And yet *TIME* introduces it by stating "Last week the Roman Catholic Church made it clear that Catholic conscientious objectors are theologically in error." The "Vatican spokesman" they mention as supporting Father Messineo remains unidentified—no one at the *TIME* office has any idea who he might be, they reply that their Rome correspondent must know and that they trust him. The religious editor of *TIME* admitted to me that the article was misleading.

But then let us examine Father Messineo's contention. He states "Conscientious objectors are guilty of Lucifer-like pride or of grave error or of complete misunderstanding of God's law." This is a serious charge made by a priest of the Church which has canonized three conscientious objectors, as E. I. Watkin points out in last month's *CATHOLIC WORKER*. I think the answer lies in their very canonization, it needs no further reply.

Then there is Father Messineo's contention that the early Christians objected to military service, not because they were opposed to war, but because of the danger of idolatry in the pagan armies. This has become a cliché among those who would justify war. But, fortunately history depends on the facts and not on authority and the historical facts are against Father Messineo's thesis. Again, as E. I. Watkin pointed out, one has only to read the trial of St. Maximilian (in Butler's

Emmanuel Mounier

It was a great shock to us to hear of the death, by heart attack, in Paris of Emmanuel Mounier, at forty-five. Mounier was the guiding spirit in the French personalist movement, and founder and director of *Esprit*, the magazine which is the organ of the movement. Mounier, who was the child of peasants, was a brilliant scholar at the Sorbonne. In 1929, when he was only twenty-four, he came under the influence of the French writer, Chas. Peguy, to whom he ascribed the inspiration of the personalist movement.

Peter Maurin used to say wherever he went, "There is a man in France called Emmanuel Mounier. He wrote a book called 'The Personalist Manifesto.' You should read that book."

He wrote: "Let us state at once that . . . personalism requires an affirmation of value, viz., the affirmation of the absolute value of the human person. We are not asserting that the human person is an absolute, although for a Christian believer the absolute is indeed a person, and in strict terminology the spiritual does not exist except as personal. But we do assert that the human person as defined by us is an absolute in comparison with any other material or social reality and with any other human person. It can never be considered merely as part of a whole whether of family, class, state, nation or even humanity. No other person, and still more no collective whole, no organism can legitimately utilize the person as a means to its end. God, Himself, in the doctrines of Christianity, respects the liberty of the person even while vivifying it from within. The whole theological mystery of free will and original sin is based on the dignity of free choice conferred on man . . . the Christian accepts it (this affirmation) because he believes that man was in his very nature made according to the image of God, that he is called to perfect that image by an ever increasing participation in the supreme liberty of the children of God."

Mounier himself was a pilgrim of the Absolute, and now he has gone to that God who is a Person, three Persons in one God. He went to meet him with good works. May he enter through Him into eternal joy.

Lives of the Saints) to see how mistaken Father Messineo is on this point. And one may consult such works as Dr. Cadoux's *EARLY CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TO WAR* to see further that there were those, and saints among them, who believed that, under the New Dispensation, war was not allowable.

The remaining accusation of Father Messineo is that the Sermon on the Mount is only of individual application, it does not apply to societal groups. There was a time when it was held that a thing could be true in philosophy and false in theology—that there could be dual truths. That teaching was condemned by the Church. Today we have a similar situation—only it is exclusively in the realm of morals. Now it is said that one may do as a citizen what would be reprehensible if done as an individual. In the sense that anything in Christianity that goes beyond natural ethics binds the Christian solely as an individual, as a citizen he is free to disregard it. Here again we have a system of dual truth. It is a denial of the psychosomatic nature of man and of Christianity. When it is for our convenience we insist that would lead to conclusions that would embarrass the State, we hasten to assert that Christianity applies only to the individual as individual. Christ preached His Sermon on the Mount to an indiscriminate gathering—He did not qualify His statements as He did when He made something of counsel only (such as celibacy). And so the Sermon on the MOUNT represents the norm of Christian conduct, individual or social.

R. L.

Importunate Friends

Feast of Saint Joseph, '50.

Dear Fellow Workers in Christ:

"The prayers of the poor are extremely powerful," Father Regamey says in his recent book *POVERTY*, "inasmuch as men are saved or damned according to how they have treated them."

Christ left Himself with us in four ways, he goes on to say—in the Eucharist; in public prayer "when two or three are gathered together in My name"; in the apostles and their successors; and in the POOR. "Poverty is a state to be venerated as such, because it was Christ's state. This is a most mysterious truth. Whatever his spiritual dispositions, whether a given poor man is holy or otherwise, look at him simply as poor . . . and by itself this has sacramental value."

In writing of the destitute Bossuet says with anguish, "Happiness means eating. They do not believe they are destined for anything great." And how we see that each day on our breadlines. And yet, Fr. Regamey writes—"Death, suffering and poverty become the most divine of human realities." They are ours because of our first sin, but Christ took them on Himself.

We have a superabundance of these on Mott Street which we want to share with you, so we are beggars again as always in the month of St. Joseph. This time, we, your importunate friends, are begging more than money to pay bills. We need the money, which Leon Bloy calls "the blood of the poor," but we need a house too, or a group of houses. These two houses we are living in now were given for our use by kind friends in 1936. The widows and holy women, who have turned their mites into the House of Calvary, are building an added wing for their cancer patients. They have offers for this house from some Chinese who are in need of more living space down here near Chinatown. The widows will not sell, however, unless we can find another home. Perhaps some of you may know of some old buildings which we can use, further down on the East Side. Our friends from the House of Calvary have been generous to us for all these years, and still are. But we want to help them too. Maybe you will give them help as well as us. You have been generous to the poor of Europe whenever we appeal to you in the columns of *The Catholic Worker*. There is always enough for all, and God never fails us. "Our Father is a millionaire," as one of our fellow workers said once.

So we beg your help and promise you a blessing. Every night as we say compline, the night prayer of the Church, we will pray for all of you, and so, "as needy, yet enriching many," we can show our gratitude to you who answer us with money and gifts. "Love is an exchange of gifts," St. Ignatius said, so—

With love in Christ,
THE EDITORS.

Italian Peasants March

Dear Friends:

Avezano, the town Barrett McGurn of the *Herald Tribune* reports on, is well known to me. I was there after the 1918 Armistice to bring what relief possible by the American Red Cross. Unfortunately, the Torlonia Princes have for generations failed in their Christian charity towards their people. Like the majority of the aristocracy, they neglected personalist action and the State had to "take over." The State did not do the job right so the people are try-

ing. What else could be expected? Avezano is one of the places to which I have been sending extra copies of the *Catholic Worker* to English-speaking friends of mine for distribution, and interpretation, among the people who voted for De Gasperi in the 1948 election, on pledges of land reform, etc. After waiting more than a year they rose in "righteous wrath"—not as a result of Communist agitation, but out of disgust at conditions. They are so incensed that they used the last batch of *Catholic Workers* to light bonfires and told my friends not to give them any more because they didn't believe it was a bona-fide worker's paper, as it did not clearly defend the rights of peasants or wage earners and the unemployed but seemed to be an apologist for landlords, employers and all the exploiters—I am quoting from a letter. I found the same distrust over here among the majority of employed, unemployed and striking workers—Child's and Arthur Murray's for example, and the colored waiters, waitresses and other workers in a large restaurant on West 44th street. When I offered them copies of the paper, and of encyclicals, they refused, saying the Church was using them as camouflage for their capitalist friends, etc. In reporting these experiences I am solely prompted by the wish that the *Catholic Worker* acquire the confidence of more working people.

Now as to Anne O'Hare McCormick's article—it is a conventional straddling of the real issues, a glaring example of the mischief half truths, etc., can wreak. She says the disturbances are "more alarming in Italy because economic conditions are so bad." (Continued on page 3)

Poverty Without Tears

(Continued from page 1)

Church, but the Father Regamey book is now being reviewed, because there is that in it which especially needs to be stressed, a sense of the need for joy in poverty. And this is hard to write about.

The subtitle of *Poverty*, is *An essential element in the Christian life*. Without it we are lost. The book is dedicated to Pol Dives, whoever he is, "the apostle to glorious poverty." We wish the author had spoken more, in his foreward, about this man. "I am bold enough," he writes, "to offer these pages to him with the hope that he will use them from his place in heaven to say to the heartbroken without number, the words he said to some of them during his mortal life: 'Do let us stop talking about bleak poverty; accepted poverty is glorious.' He had every right to say so. I do not say that he had touched bottom, for with misery there is no bottom. But he had gone so far that his stomach had shrunk and could only take in a very small amount of food. Whenever he saw a man looking sad, he at once asked his name and address: 'I must get him to accept his distress.' I only wish I could find one or two of those he comforted now. But after all, he can only have repeated to them the sublime commonplaces of the gospel. The thing was to make them come alive, and he was one man who really did, for to him they had become life. I am certain that he was born only to connect those two words, 'poverty' and 'Glorious'."

But there is not much chance that this book will find its way into the hands of the kind of people we meet up with, who are the destitute and the poor. So let us hope that it will reach and convert a tremendous number of lay apostles who themselves will espouse poverty and live it gloriously and bring a sense of joy to those who are poor. That joy will bring them the energy and power to praise God and begin to take what they need of His creatures instead of allowing themselves to be poisoned and perverted and deadened by the non essentials of our industrial America.

This is really a call to a general strike, a revolution, an expropriation of land and tools. It could be dynamite, this book, but it won't be, because the argument will go on as to what is poverty and what destitution, and how can you stop making bombs and tanks and airplane parts and television sets and pepsi-cola and brassieres and chewing gum and ash trays, and wouldn't it throw people out of work, and how can you stop buying all these things too, since that too would throw people out of work? The interminable idiocy of the talk about poverty! As soon as you begin talking of stripping yourself of cigars, (and ash trays) chewing gum and pepsi-cola, and (if you can afford it) television sets—then you are called a Jansenist or a Manichaean, negative in your approach, a deviationist heretic of an opponent of the working class as well as of the Church. If you cry aloud for land and home and tools and the good natural life for the poor without which a good supernatural life is impossible, then you are either an escapist and an inhabitant of an ivory tower, or you are a Communist in disguise trying to do away with property.

And you are a communist also if you cry out for peace and against increased armaments—against the making of the hydrogen and atom bombs and the paying of federal taxes for the making of those bombs. We know, who picketed March 15 before the tax offices up on 45th street, because we heard these jibes as we walked to and fro with our signs.

Yes, it is hard to talk of the glory of poverty and the joy of poverty without offending all. "You make things sound too easy, too pleasant," is the accusation

levelled at us by our own friends and readers when we talk of the pleasant aspects of living in the slums of the city, or in poverty on the land. Or—"What do you want—that people should stay in this condition?"

We can only reply with Eric Gill, that the aim of the Church is to make the rich poor and the poor holy. "There is always enough for one more," as a Spanish friend said, "Everyone just take a little less." "If everyone would try to be better, then everyone would be better off," Peter Maurin said. "No one would be poor if everyone tried to be the poorest."

It is almost a rule of life, those words of Peter's.

Another accusation is lodged at us—and that is that we see the misery of our life too clearly. We are always looking out of back doors. We see the rats that swarm the tenements, the vermin that crawl on the wall, the stench in the hallways of the poor, the garbage filled gutters, the greasy moisture oozing from the walls of the cold tenements, the dirt and degradation of the human beings who throng every day, rain or shine, in long lines outside our door for soup and bread.

Any statement on our part that we love this life, that we would not be happy elsewhere, that we rejoice in such wretchedness, would lay us open to the charge of perverseness, of masochism, or most damning of all, of sentimentality.

And yet we do dare to say that this rejoicing is a measure of our love. To love is to be happy; and yet to love is also to suffer. To love the poor, one must be one with them. There is always the yearning for union, for the close embrace, even if it leads to depths unutterable. We must show our love for Christ, by our love for the poor, so how can there help but be a rejoicing at the chance to show this love.

Fr. Regamey well knows the wretchedness of poverty, the fear of the poor. The Hebrew language, he says is rich in words which express poverty, and one word especially gives the idea of growing weak and wavering, another means to be black, to be in affliction. And yet even in this affliction, cannot there also be joy. "Thou he may smite me yet I will trust in him." "In peace is my bitterness most bitter."

Yet without God, without love,—of course there is nothing worse than this poverty and destitution. Only God gives it meaning.

Fr. Regamey says we do not give enough thought of the poverty of the country and times in which Christ lived. She was an occupied country and her conquerors were harsh. He did not lead a resistance movement but "he talked of the blessedness of poverty, and of tears, of gentleness and peace." That is the tone of the gospel.

And yet, Christ ate in homes of the rich and He loved the household at Bethany. Fr. Regamey interprets the words, "One thing is necessary," when our Lord chided Martha for her bustle, as "One dish is enough." Christian families looking towards healthy asceticism know well the one-dish meal. Nevertheless, Christ spoke in harsh tones of the rich and St. James almost rages, Fr. Regamey points out. He is careful to say however, "wealth is not an evil in itself. The very fact that it is so formidable attests to its value: only what is good can awaken desire. It is only because possession of any kind is a reality that voluntary poverty and poverty in spirit are great and glorious things."

"Would the earth," asks Clement of Alexandria, "produce such riches, if they brought death? . . . Their nature is not to command, but to serve us."

But Fr. Regamey does not quote St. Gertrude's dictum in regard to property, "Property, the more common it becomes, the more holy it becomes." And this too needs

(Continued on page 5)

Italian Peasants

(Continued from page 2)

nomie and social conditions are so much worse that it is easier to stir up genuine popular discontent"—as though the prevailing conditions required any stirring up to . . . The truth is that if recovery were what she and others claim it is there would not be discontent. The Italian worker is too intelligent (even if some are illiterate) to be fooled by professional agitators, Communist or any other kind. But when they see "Big Business" showing bigger profits than ever, and landlords enjoying luxuries while they and their families can't have enough to eat, then they begin to think that there is too wide a gap between the preaching and practice. The Italian and other aristocrats, landlords, industrialists, and other possessors would do well to read and ponder, and put into practice, the Christian truths that Peter packed into his great Easy Essays, especially the ones about the Christian duty of the rich towards the poor.

Mrs. McCormick misleads her readers in the greater part of her article. For instance, she fails to say anything about the real powers behind Fascism and Mussolini and Nazism and Hitler. She also fails to point out that it was "Big Business" that financed the totalitarians both in Italy and Germany. And she repeats (among others) the old lies about the "timid King," when the truth is that it was the "timid King" who instead of



"opening the way for Mussolini," invited Mussolini to form his own Cabinet, etc., and take charge of the Government. Plenty more, but I'll add another bit of truth before closing: The King left an estate of more than 1,400,000 pounds sterling deposited in London banks, where that other "Christian sovereign," Hailie Selassie, had approximately 500,000 pounds sterling.

I do believe that if the paper carried more workers' news it would serve their interests, and cause, better.

Sincerely,
JOHN B. ERIT.

Let me add, please, that I am not communicating the foregoing out of bitterness, pessimism, or anything of the kind, but simply out of realism. I believe it is high time to face facts and reality, not play ostrich. Christ Himself did not commend the lukewarm and their likes.

Another Theologian

"I respect and honor those who are in conscience opposed to taking up arms in any war, even in a just war of self-defense, and I am very glad that our country respects this right. I am only too happy to defend this right, especially for Catholics when it is attacked or denied by their fellow Catholics." Rev. Wm. R. O'Connor, St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, Yonkers. This statement was printed in the July-August edition of the Catholic Worker, in 1942, in the midst of war.

The City in Hiding

(Continued from page 1)

haunting his subject, but devil a word will you get in edgewise while he's doing it."

He had a maddeningly evocative habit of talking about a given story from his travels in such a way that it would recall, full-blown, on the instant, a similar experience of your own that happened to you in say Trinidad or Chile or Spain and you'd be itching for him to finish and make his point so that you could tell your own but when he did he'd start another without even a pause for breath. It was distressing and of course, he being a priest, you couldn't just bull ahead anyhow. But it was a pleasure to listen to him.

"That winter," he was saying, "I was in the Southwest and passing through an Indian reservation the pastor of this little mission church invited me to stay the weekend and say late Mass Sunday. He was an Irishman too, one of the Capuchin Indian missionaries and he lived in a little mud hut, a hogan they call it, behind the church with only an old Indian woman to look in on him once in awhile during the week to see if he was still living and nothing but his thoughts for company the rest of the time. As a result he was half mad for civilized conversation. The church itself was a lovely thing. A jewel it was, hung halfway up a mountain-side and overlooking a mesa that turned blue in the sunset and a range of mountains that turned more colors than you could put a name to. It was built by the Spaniards two hundred years ago and I guess the pastor was nearly half as old again. Adobe it was, built long and low, one line blending into another with not a sharp angle in any of them and the whole of it weatherbeaten to the color of wild honey with the sun on it. That's just what it looked like if you stood on the trail at the foot of the mountain and looked up: a jar of wild honey that had fallen on its side on a mountain ledge. You'd never think that anything made of mud brick could be so lovely."

He paused for a brief moment to light a cigarette with quick nervous gestures, holding the wheel with one hand and then continued. "The old pastor's parishioners were Apaches, Jicarillas, and he loved them to distress. He'd converted the most of them himself, knew their language as well as they did and he could tell you tales about them by the hour. He was mad proud of them. Fighting men they were, you know. The greatest horsemen in the world. The old man used to say 'Don't think for a moment that the white man ever conquered them. We fought them for four hundred years and in the end we didn't beat them—we smothered them. With syphilis and whisky and hunger and toys.'"

"Well this morning when I celebrated Mass they came in by the score on their ponies, the men astride in front, the women and children holding on behind and of course I'd been warned you see but still it came as a shock. During the Mass the old men the women and the children kneel in front of the church and the young braves and married men at the rear and at the Sanctus they begin to slip out and, one of them stays behind to signal. Well, they mount their ponies you see, and at the Major Elevation the one at the door signals and they force the ponies to rear and stamp and they fire off volleys from their pistols. Bam! Bam! Bam! Bam! It's their little contribution to the liturgy you see, and then afterward they slip into the church and receive as quiet as mice."

"Well, as I say, I'd been warned, but when the volleys began the pigeons that nested in the church eaves, there were hundreds of them, were startled and they all took wing. There I was, with my face uplifted to the Cross, Suscipe, Domine, and all around me

the air was filled with the rush of wings. I started to tremble, from head to foot and I couldn't stop it. I had to brace my elbows on the altar to control it." He stopped talking for a moment, accelerating to pass a burdened trailer grinding up a rise in low gear.

"It takes you suddenly sometimes," he said, "what it means to be a priest."

Well, there was no story, of course, in all of our collection that could come within a mile of that and there was little point to wrenching the conversation back to leads he had given earlier so we maintained a respectful silence. It had been like that all day, or ever since we'd known him for that matter: we'd never yet gotten the opportunity to top one of his. But a grace comes when least expected because like many talkative people who fall silent at an odd moment, he became aware of it and glancing sideways he said sharply, "And what deep thoughts are we having now?" It was the unfairness of the question I suppose, scarcely being allowed to talk and then being accused of sulking that put the thought into our head; the only difficulty was whether we dared to take advantage of the opportunity. We waited for a moment and then said casually, "Oh, just thinking." He looked over again and said, "Oh. What?" We straightened our cramped knees, stretched and then relaxed, slumping in the seat. "We were just thinking what the greatest martyrdom would be." It was quiet in the car for a moment and we could feel him stirring as uneasily as a pike in the depths of his silence, eyeing the bait for possible evidence of a barb and then he swarmed up with a rush and took the hook. "How's that again? What the greatest martyrdom would be?" We took a deep breath, we had him now once and for all, and measuring the words carefully we said, "It's entirely possible that the greatest martyrdom for an Irishman wouldn't be in failing to be a saint. It'd be in being born a deaf mute."

There was a startled silence for a moment and then he exploded in laughter and we joined him. "Oh, I deserved that one," he said. "I deserved that one. And you're right you know. Though they've refined the thought somewhat in Ireland. It's substantially what every father in Ireland tells his daughters." There was another silence, but we knew we were in for it, so we meekly swallowed the hook. "And what's that, Father?" He turned toward us to enjoy more fully the riposte and his eyes glittered in triumph. "It's 'Never marry a writer, because you'll get small use of him: he saves his love for the language.'"

He kept his gaze on us in amusement, waiting for our laughter and it came. It was impossible not to like Father Sullivan. And he was proud of him, too. "We'll stop at a stand further up and have a hamburger and coffee and stop off at this place. The chaplain's an old friend of mine. We can laugh about martyrdoms, but there's a man I take my hat off to. He's living one."

(Continued on page 7)

Family Life In Christ

By JANE O'DONNELL

The title, "Family Life in Christ," is not an exact name for this article, and yet because Family Life in Christ is so affected, aided or retarded by the resolution of the problem about which I write, that of aid to struggling and overburdened families, I deliberately use it to attract those who are interested in the restoration of family life to its fullness.

Last month after a Friday night meeting at Mott Street, a friend actively engaged in the apostolate, told Dorothy how he had vainly been trying to find a girl who could give temporary help to his wife. While awaiting their seventh child, she had had her average routine of caring for six children, the oldest of whom is seven, complicated by a siege of whooping cough. The baby, nine months old, suffering most from it, has claimed added care and attention. As any mother can readily understand, housework and laundry for six children has an appalling way of piling up on one, come sickness and bad weather.

To the Rescue

After trying to locate someone with no result, Dorothy saw how we could arrange that I go. So off I went. Owing to our complicated network of transportation in New York, I did not arrive until eleven o'clock the next morning. By that time, our Mother, as I shall continue to call her, was deep in the battle with the laundry. The eldest, the seven year old, whom Mother has trained to take all the responsibilities which her age can manage, was home recuperating, so she was able to keep an eye out for the two youngest. (The accomplishment that surprised me most was that the seven year old has "her meal" which she can fully prepare, as does her five year old sister!) There was much wash ready to be hung immediately. Soon, the kindergartner came home, so lunch had to be prepared for all.

Somehow I had thought the age distribution of the children was different. Suddenly the significance that there were always four babies under foot hit my consciousness. This presents a problem when there is cleaning to be done, for either they are in your way if with you, or you must ever be ready to go where they are, to solve the complications constantly arising. So when Mother sent the two boys out to play around the house that afternoon, she eased me into the situation, and I was able to clean uninterrupted. Dinner time came round very quickly!

Night Prayers

The meal was comparatively peaceful that night so Mother was able to have the children undress in good time and ready for the night prayers which are always said on Father's arrival home from work. What a beautiful oasis was this brief time of the entire family's lifting the mind and heart to God! The way the little 20 months old girl so sweetly repeated her Hail Mary after her Father, convinced one that this childlike measure of devotion insures the fragrance of this common prayer in the sight of the Lord. Even with the needed interruption of a correction or two, one realized that this bond strengthened all the other bonds they share. And so I began my re-introduction (some years back I had had a thorough novitiate with a mother of five, the eldest of whom was five!) to the plight of the thoroughly Catholic young mothers and fathers who, trusting completely in God's Providence, see their families expand, bringing with them greater joy all the time, and along with the greater joy, its price of responsibility and sacrifice.

For the next twelve days, I had ample opportunity to share in the family's routine. In outline it is like the schedule of most women

who have more than one child, except that we felt since we do believe the Mass is the source of all our strength, we should conspire to have one of us present at the Sacrifice each morning.

Our evening began about 8:15. Sometimes we had "round table discussion for the clarification of thought"; or a visit from friends, some seeking the encouragement that companionship with such a couple can give; or a catching up on work if Father had to work late himself; or a chance to go to bed early. Twice Father gave me a good sample of how to relax as he sat at the piano, playing serious and simple music, and singing songs, apparently forgetting everything else. Everywhere one is struck by the lack of Christian culture in the children one meets; what a joy to hear "our" children echo the songs they hear in their home. During the night, as all parents know, we were on constant call from one of the whoopers.

Flexibility Needed

Normal and possible of accomplishment as this schedule seems, one must translate it in terms of the complications which arise, those events which have a way of consuming quite a bit of time. I mean, for example, Mother's unexpected illness for a day, the telephone calls, or the several letters needing an immediate answer, the negligence of the oldest to look after the youngest toddler, requiring a search on the avenue for her, to say nothing of all the exasperating and hilarious involvements of the children in their playing. Paramount in importance is the time it takes to train children, a task obviously first in the scale of values. Without minimizing the dignity, the eminent value of this duty, one can rightly say that it is difficult, taking patience, thought, and, so frequently, much control, not only where physical and manual skills are concerned, but particularly where virtues come into play. Very often our well-planned schedules had to be interrupted or postponed for these reasons, and most especially when obedience was involved. One of our round-table discussions was on this point and its relation to Adam and Eve. What graces of understanding are possible to the conscientious parent, who can so clearly see if he but will, his own relationship to God through the pattern of his relationship with his child. The primacy of God's Holy Will, and the beauty of obedience in its power to bring freedom to each soul becomes so obvious through family life.

No End to Work

Gradually I began to see that in spite of planning, Mother and I were always behind, and I asked myself, "How on earth has she managed so long by herself?" Father is generous in his help—which cannot be said of all fathers!—but he is not a full-time nursemaid! Slowly it also dawned on me that with the exception of Christian Family Movement meetings, Mother and Father had had no free time together for months and months. This is partly caused by their dedication to a "green revolution" project whereby they should be able to move into a house in a rural area by the middle of the Summer, and joined not too long off by several families, all of whom believe in the need for building small communities of Christians, where a minimum of interference from our secular culture is possible. For this, both are willing to sacrifice their time and energy. Also, Mother's occasional changes from the domestic front have been to fill requests to speak for various groups on Marriage, changes possible because Father "took over" for the morning, or the evening, or the day.

As an onlooker, I could not help feeling that the Lord must be very pleased with their spirit, and that He also means them to have a lit-

tle breathing spell from time to time, to give them refreshment so as to continue in their determination. It was a great consolation to know that my being there could provide at least a week-end of respite from the wear and tear of their darlings, as well as an opportunity for Mother to make a long-delayed trip to the dentist, a shopping tour for the badly needed household articles, and the evening with Maritain at the Catholic Worker! I ended by telling Mother my opinion that she should be completely disheartened by the unfinished tasks, I honestly felt there was enough work for three women, and that I saw how with no laxity on their part, they could see many days with much undone. It was then Mother confessed to me that she had decided it was her own inefficiency and poor management which left so many tasks unaccomplished!

However, the judgment of "three women or else" is one which looks toward material good as a goal—apple-pie order of all laundry washed, ironed, mended, organized play—a private kindergarten, in effect, and so forth. Let no such end of peaceful material order motivate



us! The conclusion to which I do lend all my conviction is this: any family of four or more children, and especially the family of apostolic parents, is in absolute need, and entirely worthy of a full-time and devoted assistant. To put it in a more Christian way, it is deserving of a handmaid, generously uttering her fiat that through her service, Christ may more fully be born into the life of the family to which she gives herself.

Call for Apostles

This brings up the subject of the various roles open to those who believe themselves called to dedicate all their energies, all their talents to the apostolate. A separate article would be needed to treat of that, but where the family helper is concerned, I believe that for the girl who feels that she has a vocation to the single state in the lay apostolate, and her colleague who wants to do something of service before her marriage as well as prepare herself for marriage in Christ, this specific role in the apostolate of the family is very clearly taking form. What a constructive task in comparison with the service so devotedly given to the filing cabinet, the typewriter, the assembly line, by so many young and unhappy women of our age. It is a task calling for generous service in the daily disciplines of washing, cooking, cleaning, being nursemaid; it is a task, begging for understanding, gentleness and co-operation in the challenging adventure of training children; it is a task allowing for a sweet firm determination to help parents find time for relaxation and the development of their spiritual life through more opportunity to participate in our Holy Sacrifice, to attend Cana Conference to pray and meditate. We must never lose sight of our belief that the twen-

Three Years on the Land

By MARTIN PAUL

(Continued from March Issue)

It is a costly affair this starting a farming operation, especially on a farm that has been neglected and run down. In a book entitled, "Down to Earth," a Doane Agriculture man says, "don't try it without at least ten thousand dollars." On that score I didn't quite agree. We did it on much less. It will cost us that much, however, before we can say it is ours. Then there are annual deaths. Calves, pigs, cows and chickens seem to die for no apparent reason. To say nothing of the multitude of diseases they can contract. A great many of them due to the nutritional deficiencies of the mined soil in our nation.

None of this is intended as a discouraging note. It is merely an attempt to evaluate life on the land and the problems one has to face. It is quite different from the abstract dream we agrarians bring with us. But unless some make the attempt, our Christian culture will evaporate into the poison laden air of our cities. Even now, the H Bomb looms over the murky skies of our cities and people walk about with nervous ailments becoming more worried, more nervous and more neurotic. Perhaps you don't think so! But our Catholic and non-Catholic writers, sociologists and philosophers have been reiterating it for years. It is a good Catholic principle that one should avoid the occasion of sin. Crowded cities are occasions of sin with their slums, their misery and their immorality. It is impossible to live under such conditions and not absorb the toxic effects.

A New Brotherhood

The early Christians set a pattern by withdrawing into their own community. A new brotherhood, a new culture was created. Not by accepting Roman standards and customs but by creating new ones. Had they stayed within the Roman culture no one would have noticed the difference. By withdrawing they became the object of attention and the recipients of special graces to set a Christian pattern of life. It seems to me that each time in world history when we, as Christians, have deviated from that principle and allowed our culture to become a part of, or absorbed by another, we have failed. And each time some outstanding saint has brought us back again. St. Benedict in the sixth century. St. Francis in the thirteenth. Each time it took seven centuries for complete disintegration and materialism to set in. Now we are in the twentieth century another seven centuries removed from the

time of St. Francis and again it is time for saints and greatness for a return to that concept of withdrawal. It is too late to compromise. That sort of thing has brought us to such an impasse.

In his, "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" historian Gibbons summarized five reasons for the collapse of the Roman Empire. 1. Rapid increase in divorce, undermining the dignity and sanctity of the home, the basis of society. 2. Higher and higher taxes, spending public money for "bread and circuses." 3. The mad craze for pleasure; sports every year becoming exciting and brutal. 4. Building of gigantic armaments when the real enemy was within in the decadence of the Roman people. 5. The decay of religion. I can draw a parallel, can you? Now, just as in the Roman Empire the root of these evils can be traced to the cities.

Simplicity of Life

In spite of the difficulties encountered, rural life, especially communal rural life, is the answer. During the past year we have had a number of requests from people who would like to settle on the land. Usually it is a case of no funds and immediate action. Our housing shortage is acute so we, as much as we would like to add new families to our community, are not in a position to help them. But the fault is partly theirs too. Sacrifice and simplicity are as difficult to get along with as an apartment house landlord for most city dwellers. The life of frills, fun and frolic is too much for them. To realize a life on the land the sacrifice must begin in the city. Simplicity is, I believe, the keynote. It not only aids in disciplining oneself but it is also the beginning of an understanding of true value. Simple tastes make life much less complicated and, in the Christian sense, more perfect. I believe St. Thomas says the more simple a thing is the more perfect.

If after you read this you are still thinking of going to the land remember the trouble with most back to the land people, as someone has said, is just that it is a life of hard work, as all pioneering is, and at times of loneliness because of the contrast to city life. I don't advise doing it alone. Join some existing community or buy near them or near someone with the same ideas. When you arrive and begin your new life you will find there will be more sacrifices demanded of you. However, the essence of Christianity beginning with the Mass is communal and social. Charity, love and sacrifice can best be fostered when sharing it with others.

Women Wanted

Our Holy Father in his message to women in 1945 was so clear about women joining all endeavors which have as their end the restoration of the home to its dignity. Let all of us who can in any way help to bear the burden of the struggling and careworn parents in this particular way, generously offer ourselves! If my picture has no reality for you, do visit some of your parent friends and observe for yourself. Let all single women, be they younger or older, who are inspired by this motive offer their services now. If you have but one hour a week to offer, do it; if you have your life to offer, do it! If you need preparation or training, plan toward that end. Then go and humbly offer your services in the spirit of joy and dedication. What a beautiful apostolate you can have!

As to remuneration: the laborer is worthy of his hire, yes; and should the couple not be able to

(Continued on page 8)

Here Come the Kill Joys

By STANLEY VISHNEWSKI

Mercy killing was finally legalized! The Supreme Council of the Universal World Court meeting in solemn session placed the seal of its approval upon the law whereby Mercy Killing was incorporated into the statutes of the Supreme World Government.

As was to be expected the Catholic Church made a strong protest against the passage of what it called "The Legalized Murder Bill." But despite the fact that the Catholic Church had been unable to prevent the passage of the Mercy Killing Act, it had been successful in forcing through a rider whereby Catholics could claim by reason of their Faith to be Conscientious Objectors.

Immediately the cry of "Yellow Bellies, Cowards, Afraid to Die," filled the air and there were many Catholics who no longer walked in that Faith. "We do not wish to be associated with a Church which is opposed to the great humanitarian act of Mercy Killing."

And those Catholics, and there were many of them, who remained true to the teachings of Holy Mother Church were taunted with the sarcastic cries: "What would you do if your grandmother were dying of cancer? Suppose a plague struck the United States, don't you think we should painlessly eliminate the germ carriers?"

Many of the Religious Leaders found that many of their arguments against the passage of the act were considerably weakened in the sight of the public by reason of the fact that in time of war they had not defended the Conscientious Objectors.

"You who claim to be the leaders of the religious masses," Dr. Killjoy, Leader of the Put Them to Sleep Society, said in an international radio broadcast, "have come out time and time again in favor of international war. You have condoned and by your devious theological arguments have bolstered the Imperialist States in their wars of butchery. Very few of you lifted up your hands in protest when millions of young men went forth to kill and to be killed. And now you protest when the State calls upon its citizens to enlist in the war against pain. Where is the logic of your position? If it is all right for the State in time of war to call for the unmerciful killing of its enemies then it must be all right for the State in times of peace to call upon their suffering members to offer up their lives in a painless sacrifice."

Dr. Killjoy was answered by Dr. Mercy of the International Catholic Workers Association. "There is no mercy in Mercy Killing. The passage of this Act will open the way for the brutal elimination of all innocent people who in any manner or fashion meet with the disapproval of those who are in power. First the Aged and those suffering from incurable ailments and then excuses will be devised to eliminate people because we are opposed to the color of their hair or because they prefer oatmeal to bacon and eggs in the morning. We call upon all right thinking men and women to become Conscientious Objectors to this act. An act which violates the laws of God is not a law but a piece of insufferable tyranny."

The debate between Dr. Killjoy and Dr. Mercy set off a violent controversy in the press of the world. The merits of the Act were debated with heated acrimony in all quarters. To kill or not to kill became the burning question of the day.

"I did not raise my boy to be a Mercy Killer" became the popular song of the Conscientious Objectors. The Mercy Killers countered with, "I'm a Killer Diller."

"It is still too early to celebrate," Dr. Mortes said the day following the passage of the Mercy Killing Act. "We must protest against any premature celebrations."

Dr. Mortes spoke in reference to the fact that when passage of the act was flashed to the world mass Mercy Killings took place throughout the world. (It is against the law to refer to them as suicides.)

In China seventy-five members of the local Mercy Death Club raised their glasses full of poison and with a toast to death collapsed. In Africa the entire Mercy Death Association sought their merciful extinction in the same manner. Not to be outdone the deluxe Park Avenue Crowd held a bizarre victory

celebration. The guests arrived dressed as morticians, cadavers, in shrouds and as skeletons. Promptly at the stroke of twelve to the strains of the Death March they administered to each other the Mercy Death which gently placed them to sleep.

Every hospital was now required "to put to sleep" as it was euphemistically termed any patient who was suffering from incurable pain or who requested to be removed from the land of the living.

In reaction against this and as it was expected the Conscientious Objectors set up their underground hospitals where patients who realized the great value of suffering were enabled to come and spend their days in offering up their pains and agonies in reparation for the sins of the world.

"Suffering is not too bad," one patient remarked with his eye on the Crucifix, "as long as one has a reason for suffering. And besides He has already shared my pain and it is very little that I can do to bear mine in union with Him. I am happy to realize that for the first time in my life I am sure I am doing the will of God by lying on this bed of pain. When I was in the world I was never sure whether I was in the Apostolate because I loved it so or because I wanted to do God's Will—but now I am sure and I have such peace, despite my pains."

The underground hospitals were looked upon by the Catholic Conscientious Objectors as the "spiritual powerhouses" whereby the sick and the suffering were enabled by their prayers and perfect acceptance of their sufferings to radiate immeasurable treasures of Grace to the rest of the Mystical Body of Christ.

"Please thank your patients for offering up your sufferings for me." A young missionary priest from the Gobi Desert wrote. "I am sure that it is their prayers that has enabled me to continue on in my difficult work."

Hundreds of letters like the above were brought to the attention of the patients and they found great consolation in the fact that by their joyful acceptance of their sufferings they were able to do great apostolic work. "It is so happy to suffer when one knows the reason for the suffering. It is a wise God who has brought me to this pass," one patient said, "for had I continued on in my heedless fashion I would have gone straight to Hell, but this painful affliction has weaned me from the love of this world and has enabled me to make satisfaction for my sins. I do not think of the future when I suffer—I think only of the present, and I don't think that there is anyone who can't bear a pain for the present. I don't worry about the future because the future is in the hands of God."

In the State Controlled Hospitals the situation was different. At first patients were "put to sleep" only if they were in great agony or if they requested it. But as time went on the requirements slipped from their strict regulations and even nurses were allowed to administer the Mercy Death. A scandal was quickly hushed up in

Have You Ever Been to Jail?

By DOROTHY DAY

There is a fascination about prison literature, just as there is fascination and suspense in stories of pursuit. There is suspense in not knowing what is going to happen next, and anything can happen, and whether or not and when freedom will come. There is admiration, wonder and fear, too, that perhaps some day we will be in the same boat if it comes to standing up for principle.

During the war conscientious ob-

jectors, the absolutists, served sentences in Danbury, Lewisburg, Chillicothe, Ashland and other federal prisons, endured hunger strikes for long stretches, and forcible feedings and solitary confinement, overcame their fear, overcame also the world, and all in the name of freedom.

As Harold Robbins, the English Distributist, wrote: "Freedom is the primary and supreme reason for the existence of mankind. That He should be freely loved and served seems, so far as our thought can penetrate, to have been God's chief reason for calling us into being. At the cost of this freedom God could have established and maintained a world full of Order, but not of justice, for free will is of the essence of human justice."

These men who have endured so much have borne witness to Truth and Justice, and so have served God, even those who denied Him. We can only say they have denied the God of the bourgeoisie, the God of the materialists, their money or their belly or their lust.



brutally murdered Dr. Ill on 42nd street and in full sight of thousands of horrified strollers claimed that his action could not be construed as murder in the old sense of the word.

"What I did was to apply the Mercy Death to the unfortunate Dr. Ill in order to put him out of his misery. I am being tried for a crime which legally no longer exists."

The jury brought in a verdict of non-guilty. The judge, handing down his decision, said: "In a democracy the laws apply to all and that Mercy Killing was not a right given only to doctors and to professional people and limited by certain geographical locations such as hospitals and homes for the aged. Mercy Killing was a right that could be exercised by all citizens at any time or any place."

Immediately all people who had been imprisoned for murder set up a clamor to be released. The Joy Killers Association championed their cause and finally won for them a World Amnesty.

From now on no man's life was safe. The law of the jungle prevailed. No one dared to go on the streets at night for fear that he would meet the Mercy Death. Professional tasters were employed by all restaurants to assure their patrons that the food had not been poisoned. The country was thrown into chaos—the insurance companies failed. The Undertakers became the new men of power—they controlled the reins of government and passed laws determining how many people could be killed every month. And every month the quota was raised as the greed-crazed Undertakers clamored for more and more burials.

But in the underground hospitals peace and tranquillity reigned. The Conscientious Objectors knew that eventually the meek would inherit the earth.

jectors, the absolutists, served sentences in Danbury, Lewisburg, Chillicothe, Ashland and other federal prisons, endured hunger strikes for long stretches, and forcible feedings and solitary confinement, overcame their fear, overcame also the world, and all in the name of freedom.

As Harold Robbins, the English Distributist, wrote: "Freedom is the primary and supreme reason for the existence of mankind. That He should be freely loved and served seems, so far as our thought can penetrate, to have been God's chief reason for calling us into being. At the cost of this freedom God could have established and maintained a world full of Order, but not of justice, for free will is of the essence of human justice."

These men who have endured so much have borne witness to Truth and Justice, and so have served God, even those who denied Him. We can only say they have denied the God of the bourgeoisie, the God of the materialists, their money or their belly or their lust.

A Field of Broken Stones, by Lowell Naeve, in collaboration with David Wiecek, and published by the Libertarian Press, Glen Gardner, New Jersey (\$3), and Prison Etiquette, the convict's Compendium of useful information, edited and with an introduction by Holley Cantine and Dachine Ralner, Reort Press, Bearsville, New York (\$2.50), are two books which have been published recently. Both are illustrated by Lowell Naeve, an artist who served five years in prison during the last war and who is co-author of the first book and has an excerpt in the second. The second book was hand set and printed on a Gordon upright foot pedal press by the editors.

Courage

To me these men have shown a tremendous courage which is hard to analyze and make understood in these days of mediocrity, the times of "the regular fellow." We talk about the saints and are thrilled by the idea of sanctity, but the question is, how would we react to a St. Francis, a St. Benedict Joseph Labre, a Cure of Ars? Human respect is one of the greatest stumbling blocks.

I repeat We would not recognize the saint if we met him on the street corner today. He would be "the crank," the "unbalanced," the "trouble maker," etc.

The conscientious objector portrayed in these books is even willing to give up his dignity, his person, because of his fierce faith in the dignity of other men, their sacredness (and from whom do they derive this sacred character except from God—they are sons of God).

These men went on long hunger strikes because of injustices to their brother the Negro. Why is he their brother, unless God is their father? Of course they share a common humanity. It was not enough that they lost their liberty and were held confined behind bars, for long hours and days and months awaiting trial, and were sentenced to interminable stretches in prison. Have you been in jail, I repeat. Or have you been on retreat at some convent or monastery and began to feel the oppression of the walls, and to shudder at the voluntary giving up of freedom of those who have had this vocation. I have been in jail twice, in Washington and in Chicago; and also I felt that sense of oppression on the first retreat I made when I became a Catholic. I felt oppressed, closed in, hemmed in, breathing an air which was not natural to me so that I got the spiritual "bends," as men who work in compressed air sections in tunnels get "the bends" unless they go in and come out gradually, taking it little by little. We have to take our spiritual life in this way, and recognize we cannot impose on others, in our Houses of Hospitality or farms or retreat houses, a spiritual

practice which they are not yet ready for. Even in this way these books may serve our readers as preparations for the times of trial to come, like the compression chambers into which the workers go before they get out under the river, or far into the tunnel under the mountain where they are called to their appointed task on which their life, their bread and butter depends.

These are books to be read with prayer in order to achieve understanding. For instance, do you know what it is to have your person violated, taken hold of, dragged, thrown, stripped and degraded? Jesus Christ knew these things and we view His way when we make the Stations of the Cross. These may seem extreme parallels, but St. Paul recalled that Trial as "the Folly of the Cross," and so indirectly referred to Christ as the Fool of His time. He loved even to folly. He said we should forgive seventy times seven. He said to love your enemies. He told that foolish tale of the prodigal son, which if you stop to think of it, is madness and folly on the part of the old man who showed such a lack of appreciation for the sturdy qualities of the older son and contributed so to the delinquency of the younger. Why did he give him his inheritance, knowing his temperament and that he would spend it on drink and women? And then to forgive him, to fall on his neck and embrace him, to feast with him and spend more money on him! No doubt the youth fell again and again, and did the seventy times seven business work here? The folly of the Cross! The failure of the Cross!

I write these things because pacifism today seems just such folly. What good does a handful of men do?, everyone asks. How does one man going on hunger strike far away in a grey cell behind bars, mean laying down his life for his brother. And what good does it do?

One always is alone in doing these things. The revolution starts with oneself.

It is hard to see how men have the fortitude to endure the degradation of being mauled around when they make the gesture of refusing voluntarily to enter a jail and so force the guards to carry them, drag them, dump them on the floor of the jail. They endure this degradation in order that other men's bodies may be treated with respect. They have already paid a great penalty, being deprived of their liberty. But they continue their fight in jail by work strike and hunger strike and they win their fight again and again and win too the reluctant admiration of the other prisoners.

Prison Etiquette is made up of articles, stories, and poems and is illustrated, as is the other book, by Naeve. It is not likely that either book will be on sale in book stores. One must order one's copy from the publication address given above.

Lenten Prayer Of St. Ephrem

(It was this prayer which converted a Russian revolutionist in prison and he in turn converted many others. "The humiliated Christ in Russian Thought." Gordetsky.)

O Lord and Master of my life! The spirit of idleness, of despondency, of ambition, and of vain speaking, give Thou me not. But bestow upon me, Thy servant, the spirit of chastity, of meekness, of patience and of love. Yea, O Lord King, grant unto me that I may see mine own shortcomings, and not condemn my brother, for Blessed Thou art unto ages and ages. Amen.

Poverty Without Tears

(Continued from page 3)

amplifying when we consider the great holdings of the Church held in common. The voluntary communism of the Church has been the greatest success, so much so that it has meant persecution after persecution to detach her from her belongings on this earth. Persecution has a two-fold aspect, it is deserved as well as undeserved. She would not be pruned except that she is always bearing fruit, and it is to bear more fruit that God allows the pruning that is going on now in Poland, Czechoslovakia and other Communist-dominated countries. Oh, if the Catholic press would only carry the rejoicing that should go with this stripping and martyrdom how it would confound the world. Rejoicing such as that of St. Ignatius who forbade his flock to rescue him; he exulted as did all the martyrs at being found worthy to suffer. "When people do not see my body any more, then I shall be a real disciple of Christ, share in the sufferings of Christ," Fr. Regamey quotes him as saying.

If we were truly poor we would be in a good position to share this rejoicing. But I don't wonder that here in America you don't hear much of it. (How many visiting priests in New York stay at the Waldorf-Astoria? How many accept subsidies from the railroads who have robbed the poor? Maybe they do get special rates, but it is a scandal in the face of the poverty in the world.) Naturally they are not in a position to cheer on the poor martyrs in Europe and China.

When I spoke recently at Notre Dame a rich young man asked me if many gave up their wealth to the poor and went to live with the poor. I could only reply that I knew of none, and that they would be condemned as fools by the very poor for whom they sacrificed their goods. (Our faith in this way is exercised, to see Christ in His poor, and such exercise should make it strong and with it our love.) We did know one young man who tried to, whose confessor told him to keep his money and administer it for the poor. But Fr. Regamey has this to say:

"Is it more perfect to give up once and for all everything one has, or to keep one's wealth and put it to a charitable use? Tradition has constantly taught that in itself the first sacrifice is better. Needless to say, a given soul may merit far more by the second than the first. It all depends on charity, and on our individual vocation."

One could write volumes on this subject of poverty, it is so rich,

and you learn so by doing. St. Francis says that you do not know what you have not practiced. I know that I can write far more on the subject than I could seventeen years ago when the Catholic Worker started. Of course I learned by my mistakes. For instance, I learned about vocations to poverty, about presumption and pride in poverty, about the extremists who went to the depths in practicing poverty, (if, one can reach them) and after a few years left work and settled down to bourgeois and individualistic comfort. It is good to accept one's limitations, not to race ahead farther than God wants us to go, not to put on sackcloth and stand on the street corners. I do not know who said it, but it was a wise priest—"Do not do any penance that you do not want to do." In other words, pray for the desire, and even desire to have the desire for poverty. Most people do not see the sense of it, it is nonsense to them, because it goes against the senses, exterior and interior.

I cannot think of anything better than this book of Father Regamey's to build up that desire. It is jammed full of sentence after sentence, paragraph after paragraph which could be quoted. It is condensed, only 180 pages, but you are carried away on page after page so that it could be used for a meditation book for the coming year.

Once or twice I started to be critical but I found I could not be. Once when Fr. Regamey seemed to be accepting too uncritically Bosuet's opulence. "He came to feel that if he limited his style of living, he would lose more than half his genius." We must admit the possibility of detachment in the midst of obvious luxury of house and equipage and table, but just the same, what we need in the face of materialist America and Russia, is the glorious poverty of St. Francis, of St. John Marie Vianney, of Charles de Foucauld, of St. Benedict Joseph Labre—whose poverty was the destitution of our skid-rows and boweries.

Pere Regamey issues a call to change the world, "the world of capitalism and communism" which he equally condemns. "The Christian who is obedient to the spirit of Christ wonders which he hates most, capitalism or communism, so hostile to each other, so fundamentally alike. He holds the same grievance against both, that they have taken from the poor the spirit of poverty, and so cast them into despair. This crime shows most clearly in capitalism; but communism and all other materialist systems which promise paradise to these little ones produce the same results, for to give rise to a hope placed in the things of earth, and a false hope at that, is to give rise to almost a double despair. We certainly have a job to do of restoring earthly justice to the disinherited; the Church has been calling us to it through the mouths of recent Popes; but she keeps her scale of values constant, she always holds the Godward life of the soul highest of all."

On my last visit to the west coast I saw plenty of poverty and destitution. After Mass one Sunday there was a communion breakfast in a parish hall (coffee and sweet rolls) and I talked to all the women in the parish of the works of mercy, and I pointed out that we were all poor, having need of each other, and that some could give time, or strength to each other, in addition to the more palpable things like food and clothing and lodging. Doing a week's wash for a sick mother is no small work of mercy! I knew that most of my listeners were poor, but I did not realize how poor until Fr. Dugan took me around afterwards to visit some of them in their homes, those same women I had been talking to. The parish was down by the railroad tracks and is made up of two-story frame tenements like

those of New England mill towns. I was horrified at the condition of neglect of the houses, and when I saw inside, I found them worse than New York tenements. Families of seven and ten and twelve children were in two rooms, with no heat, no hot water, one bath in the hall for all, and every one or two room suite rented out to families for fifty dollars a month.

Men built double decker beds for their children but still they have to sleep three or four in a bed. There are 30,000 heads of families unemployed in Oakland. It was real January weather when I was there, cold enough for one's heaviest clothes, as cold as New York. There are many migrant workers settled in Oakland, Stockton, Sacramento and Fresno, glad of anything in the way of shelter to be out of the cold and rain. I visited one family in a tent in Mountain View, one of the children sick with pneumonia, others with colds, and the mother trying to cook and wash clothes on the wood-burning kitchen stove set up in the tent. There are literally tens of thousands of families living this way in one room, and in tents.

Only the other day the New York Times had a front page story of the condition of the migrant farm workers in California, but it is a pattern which is carried out all over the country, in every state, and which goes with and is a necessary part of our collective industrialized pattern of life. Decentralization, Distributism, Christian communal villages, self governing—these are disregarded in a general acceptance of "life as it is."

Meanwhile, the storehouses are bulging with powdered eggs, milk, grain, stores of all kinds, and for the poor there is not even the bread of sorrow; there is neither work nor bread.

On the one hand there are the government plans for subsidies for the farmers, price controls, etc. The dairymen talk of a surplus of milk while the children sicken and die. Farm journals talk of the subsidy. They write of three subsidies open to them, selling the surplus to a condenser, reducing their herds, or dumping. They ask for a drop in price from 3 to 5 cents; a greater differential between store and home delivered milk; an inconsequential price difference between a quart of milk and a 14½ oz. can of evaporated milk and not the present ten cents; and finally penny milk for school children. They say that a movement towards a control of the industry as a public utility is inevitable. But with the present government control, taxation is up and prices are down and the dairymen complain that they cannot get more than 12 cents a pound for cull cows from the butcher.

It is the same with all crops, raisins, apricots, peaches, poultry, cotton, apples, citrus fruits and wool of that rich state of California. It is the same with water, electric power, with the very soil itself—how to own it, how to control it, how to legislate about it, how to change the pattern as it now is.

There are politicians and lawyers studying all these things, and most of them are working towards bigger and better organization. And in the face of their solutions, the Christian solution, the solution proposed in this book, and in the Gospels, is that of voluntary poverty and the works of mercy. It is the little way. It is within the power of all. Everybody can begin here and now even if it means only (!) girding themselves, stripping themselves, and even the doing of it means the battle has begun, the fight is on, and victory is assured.

We have the greatest weapons in the world, greater than any hydrogen or atom bomb, and they are the weapons of poverty and prayer, fasting and alms, the Godless spending of ourselves in the service and for His poor. Without poverty we will not have learned love, and love, at the end, is the measure by which we shall be judged.

Men the A&P Has Broken

(Continued from page 1)

WINS THIS CASE. NO ONE IS EXPECTED TO STOP DEALING IN THE A&P. In 1949 the A&P was found guilty in a criminal case brought against it by the Anti-Trust Division in Washington, of monopolistic practices, and fined one hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars. But since the great chain made twenty million dollars by these practices, it was willing to give this cut in the spoils to the government, and continue with the practices. Now the Anti-Trust Division has brought civil suit against the chain, to compel them to cease and desist these practices.

The A&P is made up of six thousand stores, with seven divisions of about eight hundred and fifty stores each. Over all this is a holding company in N. Y., presided over by the Hartford Brothers, sons of the founder of the chain. The Hartfords own ninety-nine and ninety-seven hundredths of the stock. From the six thousand stores beneath them, the Brothers, who are dictators, have a very simple demand, seven dollars a share, and drop tramp and farmer, consumer and A&P clerk, are twisted in the vise of their avarice. What is tragic about the whole thing, and this is due to five million dollars worth of fraudulent advertising, in two thousand newspapers, is that the public is on the side of its oppressor, and that the government is being blamed by the poor for being, in this case, on the side of the poor and the worker. In relation to the question of the free press, it is to be noted that the newspapers almost all sacrificed truth to the juicy plum of A&P advertising, with the exception of David Lawrence's column in the N. Y. Herald Tribune, the Washington Star and syndicates, the Jesuit magazine America, the New Leader, Labor, and a few others.

All the Anti-Trust lawyers are trying to do, and they cannot spend five million dollars worth of the taxpayers' money to advertise it, is to remove the stranglehold of this N. Y. holding company, and to make these seven divisions seven independent chains of eight hundred and fifty stores each. A chain of eight hundred and fifty stores is no small operation, no penny ante outfit, as they say, despite the A&P's tone of being a small child lost in the dark, if the big, bad wolf in Washington wins.

Traffic in Men

Why should the government's winning lead to lower prices? Above all, what is the relation of all this to man, his value in his own eyes, in his brother's eyes, and in God's eyes? Does his value go up and down with a scarcity market? Is he a commodity to be bought and sold across a counter, like a piece of cheese?

Let us take the year 1939. Previous to that year, A&P decided that the profits for 1939 were going to be twenty million dollars, of which thirteen million were to come from rebates, i.e. kickbacks in some form or another from A&P's suppliers. The suppliers get back what they consider their own fair profit, by taking these inordinate discounts to A&P out in two directions; they charge higher wholesale prices to their other customers, who then must charge higher retail prices, and they clamp down on the workers whom they employ for as much as the traffic will bear. Since the A&P only controls six percent of the nation's grocery business, that means that the other ninety-four percent of grocers is forced to pay and charge higher prices to subsidize A&P. So that 94 out of 100 housewives are paying hidden prices to A&P.

A&P Apples

And the workers, employed by the suppliers, who pay the cost of this program? To understand what they are up against, let me quote from John Steinbeck's "In Dubious Battle." The Growers'

associations are one form of A&P supplier. In the book, Jim Nolan and MacLeod are working with the migrant workers in a California orchard trying to organize them. The workers without families have come in by box car, in this age of compulsory industrial celibacy. The families come in old trucks or battered cars, piled high with bedding, pots and pans, and children.

MacLeod is speaking: "Now when the apples are ripe the crop tramps come in and pick them. And from there they go on over the ridge and south, and pick the cotton. Now these guys that own most of the Torgas Valley waited until most of the crop tramps were already there. They spent most of their money getting there, of course. They always do. And then the owners announce their price cut. Suppose the tramps are mad? What can they do? They've got to work picking apples to get out even." Well, buried beneath the rich humus of leaves, of blossoms and overripe apples in our great orchards are some of the organizers who espoused the cause of these "little poor ones" for a human existence. In the end, Jim Nolan, too, ambushed, had his face blown off with a shotgun blast.

Fiction? For three years now, the workers on the giant Di Giorgio farm in California have been on strike, and merciless financial power has been massed against them. Scabs are brought in by the trainload, some, Mexican nationals who don't know the language, and therefore the issues. The leader of the migrants, whom the industrial emperors spell rodents, was sitting at home with his family. Organizers should keep their shades down, for a shotgun fired through the window killed him.

And down in Arizona this week, according to the Daily News of Mar. 10, there is a labor camp starving, among them a one-legged fruit tramp, who was selling his blood to feed his five children.

The A&P, Labor's Friend.

All this is some of the results of A&P's vicious wholesale operations. Let's look at the retail side of the picture.

Have you wondered sometime why the little independent down the street from you is charging thirty cents for corn flakes when the A&P is only charging twenty cents? What you don't know is that the A&P, hi-jacker, got those corn flakes out of the supplier for fifteen cents, through monopoly power intimidation, whereupon the supplier took it out on the independent by charging him twenty-five cents.

"You can work sixteen hours a day seven days a week. You can cut your expenses to the narrowest margin that ingenuity and enterprise allow—but you cannot sell corn flakes at a price five cents below what you paid for them. There is no point talking about competition under such circumstances." (Hon. Wright Patman, Texan Representative, in the Congressional Record.)

There were two young veterans I knew who opened a little store up on 207th St., in New York. They only lasted a year, lost their savings, and disappeared into the yawning abyss of failures. I wondered why. Now I know. There was an A&P a block down.

The Year 1939

Previous to the year 1939, as I said before, the A&P dictatorship decided that it would make a profit that year of twenty million dollars. It also decided that one of its seven divisions, the Atlantic Division, would lose \$567,100. There were some competitors to be gotten out of the way, so that in the future there would be no embarrassing comparison of prices. That A&P on 207th St., was to operate at, say a five thousand dollar loss that year, and maybe up to four years, the usual amount of

(Continued on page 7)

Back Issues Needed

FOR US

If you have the March, 1947, or the December, 1948, or the February, 1949, or March, 1949, issue of THE CATHOLIC WORKER we could use them to complete our bound issue. Send to THE CATHOLIC WORKER, 115 Mott St., New York 13, New York.

FOR SWARTHMORE

Also Swarthmore Peace Collection needs the following issues:

- Vol. 1—numbers 1 to 12.
- Vol. 2—numbers 1 to 12.
- Vol. 3—numbers 1 to 6 and 8 to 12.
- Vol. 4—numbers 7 and 9 to 12.
- Vol. 5—number 11.
- Vol. 6—number 9.
- Vol. XLV—number 1.

The Swarthmore Peace Collection is most important in that it exists to keep in one place all relevant material on the peace movement and we here at THE CATHOLIC WORKER are grateful to those who aid them in having a complete file of our paper.

The City in Hiding

(Continued from page 3)

when we entered the gate (God with all here) it was a city that met our eyes, hidden secret from the world behind the shield of hedge and trees. A city populated to bursting, with broad avenues, plazas, beautifully tended lawns, parks, fountains, tall modern buildings of glass, brick and concrete. We passed a playground where a group of young men were playing softball, others catch, some pitching horseshoes and trucks passed us on the main avenue, filled with what were obviously work gangs or repair crews. The residents hurried along the sidewalks purposefully, dressed casually, seemingly cheerful and friendly, many of them waving to us as we passed. There was nothing at all to distinguish them from the residents of any other town of comparable size. Except, of course, that they were mad. Or, at least, certified to be so by competent commissions.

Father parked the car in the lee of one of the glass brick structures and we sat watching the scene quietly while he went in search of his friend. After a time we noticed him coming out of the building and when he waved to us we joined him and were introduced to the two men with him, one the chaplain and the other a tall middle-aged man with a high freckled forehead and gold rimmed glasses who was some section chief psychiatrist. They were talking about mental diseases and their causes, Father Sullivan asking the questions and the psychiatrist answering in the polite, haphazard way of a librarian looking around for a book that will tell all about it and save him the trouble of answering. One got the impression that he wasn't at all sure whether he was speaking to sympathetic listeners and was half-convinced that Father thought him nothing but a necromancer. Or maybe it was the other way around.

"It is hereditary, then?" Father was saying. "Or inherited pre-disposition or physical or what?" The psychiatrist stopped looking off in the distance and smiled down at Father with the lonely patience of a man who spends half his social life trying to reduce his professional activities to terms comprehensible to curious questioners. "It differs," he said. "Varies rather. There's no over-all answer." He sighed and then said "If you take a one-foot spike and drive it an inch into the wall and then subject it to sledge hammer blows it will buckle under the cumulative strain. But it will buckle not at the point where it receives the blows but at the point farthest removed, the point nearest the wall. Continued strain on over extended capacities, that's what caused most of the people here to buckle. More every day, of course. The strain's too much outside. About one in seven will buckle in this state sometime during their life and arrive here, or somewhere like it. To mix a metaphor: The foundations of emotional security in the world today are fluid not solid. People have to be taught emotional resilience. To plan their emotional structures as ships, capable of staying afloat on shifting foundations rather than houses, firmly based." He groped in the pockets of the raincoat he was wearing and taking out a beautifully polished Dublin shaped pipe frowned down at the empty bowl. "Arks," Father said. The psychiatrist looked up startled, as though he should have been dealing with Father in a different manner entirely. "You know," Father said, "Noah, Arks, ships to ride out storms in." The psychiatrist smiled, almost in relief. One could almost hear the filing cabinet shutting on the thought in his mind: "Religious manias are the worst of all." They went on talking for a while and then went off on an inspection tour, and we excused ourselves to wander around on our own.

The day was drawing to a close and many of the buildings we passed were lighted against the early gloom. We walked slowly

along the flagged pavement past the neat lawns and well-kept houses, retracing our path to the ball field we had passed. At an intersection some distance from the main gate a girl in street clothes and wearing a nurse's cap stopped us, perhaps because we looked normal, or then again it might have been that we looked as though we knew the place, and asked, "Where's Administration?" We looked around helplessly, the streets wove in all directions. "This is my first day," she said. "I left it earlier but it got lost on me." We said we were in the same boat, but that it must be down further in the direction we had come from. She thanked us and walked on, the tapping of her heels making a lonely sound in the distance.

Memory's a leopard at times, chained round and made safe by the commonplaces of everyday existence but a word, a phrase, a chance happening has the power to slip its collar and the mind is raked by the claws. It was the random junction of the word "Administration" with a phrase of the doctor's that released it. "It will buckle at the point farthest removed, the one nearest the wall..."

It had been a day much like the present one, rainy, grey, with a cool wet wind, but ten years distant in time. It was in a New England state and we were visiting a girl we knew at the time, a psychology major who was spending her vacation working as a psychiatric aide in a mental institution. It was an incredibly swank place, private cottages starting at twelve hundred a month, a private "companion" to each "guest," town cars, swimming pool, squash courts, dance hall, club rooms, movie house. The atmosphere was one of quiet, discreet luxury, too secure in its sources of income to bother with impressing and all the more impressive for that reason.

We had been sitting on a painted bench overlooking a rolling sweep of dark emerald lawn so beautifully cropped that it looked as though a flock of sheep were kept for that express purpose. In the distance, at the foot of the lawn, was a swimming pool and behind us the back of a handball court formed a tall wall that cast a long shadow over us. The girl had risen and said, "I have to get over to Administration, but I won't be more than a half hour. I'll meet you there and we'll get out of here for awhile. I'll show you the town."

She had left and we had continued to sit, idly watching the small group of swimmers in the distance energetically diving and thrashing about in the pool despite the rawness of the day and when first we became aware of the woman she was standing slightly behind us. She must have approached from the direction of the handball court, her footsteps deadened by the soft turf. She was perhaps forty-five or fifty; impossible to tell with accuracy, groomed-to greyhound smartness and wearing a dark dress of navy faille with a buttoned, stitch pleated bodice and a white pique collar. The dress was the only clue to her status as guest. It had the deceptive simplicity that can be achieved only with the aid of an unlimited charge account. The psychiatric aides usually dressed with the messy earnestness that distinguishes college girls who are taking heavy intellectual courses.

She came around in front of us and sat down with easy grace, composed and sure of herself and when she spoke it was with the light assured tone of a hostess in her own house putting an awkward visitor at his ease. "You're not a guest?" It was only a half question. We shook our head. Usual conversational gambits of course were out (No, are you? Do you like it here? It seems a beautiful place) and we had still to select one, when, almost as though she

were reading our thoughts she said, "It's a delightful place—if you were spending a week-end." We murmured an inane, "I suppose." She smiled and said, "I've been here two years." There was nothing to say and after looking at us attentively for a moment, waiting for our reply she said, "Don't you want to know why I'm here?"

There are times, jackknifing in a dive from the high board in a strange pool when you are caught at the apex of your plunge, feet straightened, taut in the net of fear that your dive will take you too deep, that you will hit bottom and only an act of will keeps you from twisting your body, trying to break the force of your dive. It was like that now. With a sure deep instinct we knew that the depth had been misjudged, that a disaster was approaching and that it would have been better to have left, excused ourselves on the instant, but we were powerless to make the effort and we sat without moving, a little tense, waiting for the blow.

"I have a daughter who thought



I should come here for awhile," she said. "Her name is Anne." The value she gave the name had the aching loneliness of a ship's bell in the fog. She tolled it rather than said it. "... a lovely girl. We look like sisters rather than mother and daughter. But of course I'm fair..." We shifted uneasily on the bench, glancing around for the companion, but the lawn was deserted. "We did everything together. We were friends." The intensity of her speech had increased in the few sentences though her expression was still calm and trying to throw an obstruction in the path of her conversation we said, "Does she visit?" She looked startled and then said, "Oh, yes. Of course it's difficult for her. You see, her husband feels badly about all these stories."

"Oh. Well. Stories," we said, overvaluing the words, trying to jar the conversation from its path. "They had this child, Dickie," she said. "Of course it was a strain on my daughter when it was born, but she was absolutely slavish over it. Scarcely ever went out. I used to visit and make her go out. I used to cook a meal for them now and again when they went out I never got a chance to do anything for her after she married. I remember cooking a roast for them the last time. It was a leg of lamb." She said the last sentence in a flat hard tone that brooked no contradiction. We waited helplessly and she was silent, looking off at the swimming pool. We waited until the held breath burned in our lungs, but she was still silent. We exhaled slowly and began to breathe evenly. It had been nothing after all. Our instinct had built a false climax.

She turned her gaze from the pool to us and said casually, "Of course the doctors here have made up one of those fantastic stories. That it was Dickie. But that's stupid. Why would I do a thing like that? I loved my daughter."

There are times when even the toughest sophistication is an armor of snow and life a flame thrower; the armor melted in the space of a sigh, leaving the wearer wretched and helpless. There could be no mistaking her meaning. It had been the infant... The mind faulted like a flogged horse at a too high jump, refused the image, began again with sick dread: The young couple coming

Men the A&P Has Broken

(Continued from page 6)

time it takes to put an independent out of business.

Probably the manager of that A&P received a letter similar to the one received by a Richmond A&P manager from an A&P official:

"I certainly don't think that the Sanitary next door to you at Carey Avenue is a competitor and the hotter we can make our program the quicker this outfit will realize that they have no place in the super-market business in Richmond."

They don't let these little independents know that they're going to take four years to break them. Their sadism goes too deep for that. Four years of hoping, of mortgaging the house a first, a second time, of shamefacedly borrowing from in-laws, of letting your teeth rot because you haven't the money to go to the dentist, four years of the heart's bleeding. No wonder Peter Maurin used to say that the men on the Bowery are victims of our system.

Home Town Papers Copy

But remember that the A&P was not losing in the all-over picture. They were to make twenty million dollars in 1939. Who then was footing this loss that was planned ahead too. The housewives in the central western division, especially, to the tune of \$673,200, and the housewives in Scranton, Pa., to the tune of \$130,000. Probably, most competition had already been silenced there, and the A&P could charge cost plus what it damn well pleased.

The A&P clerk is the third victim of A&P's viciousness. Another item of A&P's planned profits for the year 1939 was a sum of \$2,400,000, which the chain ex-

pected to collect as so-called overage." Pay particular attention to this, for it is in the nature of a downright miracle that A&P is accomplishing all the time.

"Every businessman knows that he cannot expect to sell all that he buys. There will inevitably be loss from shrinkage, pilferage, spoilage, and other unavoidable causes between the receipt of goods in his store and their sale to his customers." (Congressional Record). Not so the A&P. The stock on the A&P shelves gains. Those little cans of milk, those heads of cabbage, Quaker Oats, they go on breeding overnight and producing posterity. At any rate, A&P, in its planned profits for 1939, planned to make more than two and a half million dollars in stock gains. This was year-in, year-out policy. So much so that the managers who brought about this remarkable phenomenon were promoted, those whose stock didn't multiply like the loaves and fishes, were fired. There is no union in A&P, of course.

The managers and the clerks in A&P have families, and they cannot be blamed for yielding to the pressure from above to give short weight and to overcharge, even though the American housewife paid almost three million dollars in 1939 for coffee and sugar she never received.

But certainly, in the name of human decency, let alone of Christianity, we should defeat a system which compels a man to be dishonest, and to put a neighbor out of business, and to sell vegetables and fruits that are watered with the blood of the crop tramps. "He shall take pity on the needy and the poor, and precious shall be their blood in His sight."

home, refused again. It had happened, that was all. The mind could bear that without enlargement. But it was numb under the shock. For many of us life is a conspiracy of denial that we spend trying to negate our instinctive knowledge of its capacity to terrify us. We treat it like a fire on the hearth, so hedged around with the ashes of petty desires and commonplace wants that we forget the terrible power of its unleashed majesty. Her story made a pattern, all too common today: In a culture that deifies youth and physical beauty, builds monuments and temples of industry to its worship, age is a thing to be feared, hated, mistrusted, denied by whatever means possible. So long as the daughter remained childless the fiction of youth, of sisterhood, could be maintained, but the child was living proof that she was a grandmother, and a grandmother no matter how young, is a grandmother still.

What was there to say in comfort, in hope? That each of us, all of us, under sufficient provocation and stress are capable of outrages and crimes beyond our normal conception? That we can't even begin to conceive of the things that can happen to us in life? It's true of course, but cold comfort, for the guilt and the anguish of a personal crime have to be born personally and it isn't enough to be forgiven. One has to learn to forgive oneself. "... "Oh yes," she had said. "My daughter visits me." It's possible to weep in the face of the nobility and the power to forgive that some women have and to weep also for the others too, who, trapped by life in the cell of their own pride and ego cease the struggle to turn their love outward and to love others rather than themselves. And fatally, turning inward, follow the dark corridors in the minds of all of us that traversed to their ultimate limit will lead us to the hidden door, that opening will debouch us into the city in hiding and sliding smoothly and silently shut behind will leave no crevice for frantic retreat, betraying us on the

instant into a world wrenched from its orbit, filled with black, howling voids; a roaring jangle of exploding kaleidoscopic colors, flashing wheels of blinding light and uprushing darkness, the air filled with the clanging of unknown doors sentinelled by fears like apes of variegated color; behind which the atmosphere will be absorbed horror and through which the terrors of the night will enter and have dominion over the day.

If we wore the flesh of our knees raw we couldn't begin to give thanks for the gift of peace of soul and for the every day existence that we chafe under and take as our casual due.

It had begun to rain again and the swimmers in the pool were leaving hastily with squeals of laughing protest but we did not move. The woman beside us was silent. There was nothing further to say. We sat side by side on the green bench, not speaking; dryeyed and aware of the futility of tears while all around us the Heavens wept, the rain falling soft as a shawl on the gaunt black trees.

BOOKS

On Pilgrimage
by
DOROTHY DAY
\$1

Catholic Radicalism
by
PETER MAURIN
\$1

Order from
CATHOLIC WORKER
115 Mott Street
New York 13, N. Y.

Family Life

(Continued from page 4)

give the sum of your hire, remember that Our Blessed Lord said, "Be not solicitous . . ." "all these things shall be added unto you." Somehow, if you have a true spirit of poverty, you will manage. And should you find a family, well-supplied in this world's goods, know that you can always use your surplus to clothe your less fortunate colleague!

Too, the near future should witness the setting up—preferably by members of the lay apostolate who should be also trained domestic workers—of centers to which willing girls could offer their services, to which mothers of several children could apply. What a heaven such centers could be in the family apostolate!

In the meantime, I should like to suggest how you could cooperate in our contribution to family life via the Retreat House. Write and let us know if we can call on you to come and help with the mothers and children who will be with us this Summer, or if you have enough experience to take over a family while releasing the parents for a much desired and needed retreat. Write directly to Dorothy Day, telling her exactly when she can count on you—and I hope you make up your mind soon!

Should your location and circumstances prevent you from coming to New York to help, know that the various Catholic Worker groups, the Friendship Houses, and all the apostolic centers throughout the country are constantly being asked where help could be located. If you really want to serve Christ in His families, and offer yourself, know that something very challenging and very thrilling will turn up for you!

May all those sharing in the family apostolate learn that as "He was subject to them," we can more and more become subject to Him!

LEON BLOY

In declaring us member of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit clothes us with the dignity of redeemers and when we refuse to suffer, we are guilty of simony and betrayal of trust. We have been made for that and that alone. When we shed our blood it flows on Calvary and from thence over the whole earth. Woe to us therefore if this blood be poisoned. When we shed our tears which are the blood of our souls, they fall on the heart of the Virgin and from them on all living hearts.

THE NEWBORN

By Helen Caldwell

My Lord and best beloved
Teach me Truth
Give me faith
And give me love without sentimentality.
Yet keep me from that creed that holds
all expression of solicitude
affection or any tenderness,
sentimentality.
Lest in trying to avoid this
I grow afraid to live or love at all
But make my heart a stone within
my breast
or clothe myself with superficial
thoughts and feeling.
And take a rival lover, Intellectualism
and bring forth bastard children
to you
monstrous, deformed, banal and
idiotic,
Yet clothed with silken garb of
sophistication
boasting their modern mind
flaunting their license
bearing the name of truth or love
or reason
without a right to bear it
as if one were their father;
not knowing
or not wanting to acknowledge
their own father.

BEDE JARRETT

"Social organization and the land system are two of the perpetual problems of mankind."

Anarchism—Grace and Nature

(Continued from page 1)

or the commanding clique." (INNER LAWS OF SOCIETY, p. 117). Father Sturzo further states (THE TRUE LIFE, p. 189), "But even when measures are humane and good and the authorities do not fail in their duties, there yet creeps into the social complexus that sense of pride and wealth which, together with the whole complexus of evil objectivized and socially fecundated, constitutes what is called 'the world.'" And then again, in this latter book, he says "but since in us there is not only sensible life, but also intellectual, moral, social, political, religious life, in a word, the life of relationship, all that impedes the expansion of life to an ideal fullness, though actually unattainable, must be classed as evil."

It is because Christian anarchists feel that the State, as it exists in the concrete, is such an evil, that it does in fact hinder man even to the observance of the natural law, that "power societies" tend inevitably to corruption, that the whole concept of the State as an entity having prior claim on the person is unsound, that we do contend it is an undesirable form of government even for those under the natural law. The State is a jealous god, it has created a dichotomy of morals permitting to the collectivity what is deemed immoral in the individual.

"Whoever," states Father Sturzo, "accepts our thesis on the nature of society and its concretization, cannot divide morals into individual and society. Morality is always individual because all human acts proceed from the individual, and it is always social because all human acts extricate themselves in society" (INNER LAWS OF SOCIETY, p. 205).

Christian Ideals

Now, as I see it, since the person can never (if he would remain a conscious person) sacrifice any transcendental values to the demand of societal units (since such demands are not valid), there remains an obligation on the Christian to advocate and assimilate those specifically Christian ideals which conflict with "the world." Today that means opposition to conscription (which violates the free man), to war (which has become synonymous with mortal sin), and to the state (which hinders the realization of these transcendental). Therefore there is an obligation on the Christian to hold as an ideal and to work towards a society, which indeed may not come about unless mankind is converted, but which nevertheless is the measuring rod to determine what direction we should go.

If we feel that the State is an enemy to the person, that Christian ideals will not be possible of realization under the State because as they are realized the State must disappear, then it is but logical that we do what we can to weaken the State, that we take an anarchist direction rather than a socialist one.

As grace presupposes nature and as nature is receptive to grace, for man, says St. Thomas, has a natural inclination to virtue, so, to realize the type of society that would be possible if permeated with the supernatural, it is desirable that nature itself approach the direction to which the supernatural leads. This is done when society becomes more free, not when it becomes more authoritarian, and the closer it comes to dispensing with power rule the closer it comes to admitting the supernatural.

Not Theocratic

It must not be thought that what I speak of is the imposition of the supernatural by some type of theocratic rule, or that I countenance the idea of coercing men into a public practise of the Sermon on the Mount. Mankind comes freely to God or not at all and it is the function of none of us to compel that acceptance. What I do believe is that all men can, with God's help, live the supernatural life and that we must not assume we are the elect and the

rest of mankind in such a deplorable state that for all practical purposes we must assume that mankind will forever remain unredeemed and our societal goal must therefore fall short of the Christian ideal. And just as Adam sinned in preferring a lesser good, so do we err when we choose as our societal goal anything less than a society in conformity with the spirit of Christ. This society is one of freedom and must be realized in freedom and therefore excludes theocratic methods. It is not a question of "expecting" people to live the supernatural life—it is a question of having for a goal a society that is permeated with the supernatural and which presupposes the possibility of total redemption.

Father De LuBac

Our friend further writes, "communities predominantly composed of those who fall outside (the supernatural) must be governed by principles of the natural law, since the community must be governed according to the status of its members."

This whole subject of grace and nature seems to have become hopelessly complicated of late. I can only state, from a layman's point of view, what to me, at the present time, seems the correct approach. I suppose Father de LuBac is in error if, in his contention that there is a natural desire for the Beatific vision (and consequently of the supernatural order), he means there is a conscious natural desire to this effect. But I think his proposition quite tenable if explained in terms of the unconscious. By this I mean that the desire for a supernatural end which existed in Adam slipped into the unconscious as a result of original sin and that revelation affords the catharsis whereby it becomes a conscious desire.

It must be remembered that the concept of "natural man" is an abstraction with no objective existence. That is, in the concrete, there has never existed a "natural man." Adam was created with supernatural and preternatural gifts. After the fall—man lived somewhat below his nature as such. For although original sin did not deprive him of anything essential to his nature yet, since he had "normally" lived in the supernatural before the fall, his reason had not the perfect control of him that a state of "pure nature" would suppose. And this because he now lacked an aid (the supernatural) to which he had been accustomed and the desire for which had deserted his consciousness or—if not below his nature then, through grace given in anticipation of Christ (or since the Crucifixion as a result of Christ) he lived in the supernatural.

If it is contended that this does away with the absolute gratuity of the supernatural it can be replied that there is no reason why nature cannot contain a desire for an end that is not due as such but exists in the unconscious as a memory of that time before the fall when to live in the supernatural was normal. Normal, not because it was due Adam, but because God, in fact, created him such and he was used to this and knew no other order until he lost the supernatural as a result of sin. If it should be further stated that this would mean frustration to the natural man who would attain only a natural end it must be remembered that "natural" man is a non-existent entity. That anyone who follows the light of his conscience receives baptism of desire and hence realizes a supernatural end. As for those who die without baptism of water or desire or blood they will indeed attain but a natural end (provided they are free from actual mortal sin) but since in them the unconscious natural desire for the supernatural remains in the unconscious there is no injustice since they will be naturally happy, which is all they consciously desire.

I do not know whether the opinion of St. Bonaventure is ten-

able and so only state it without adopting it—that is that at the moment of death God supplies baptism of desire to those (like unbaptized infants) who would otherwise die without it and that thus they also attain the Beatific Vision. This, of course, would do away with the concept of Limbo except as a theoretical place where the theoretical "natural" man would go. In all this matter of the natural and the supernatural I write subject to correction—I am not a theologian.

Father Sturzo

However all this has implications for the social order and here again I have recourse to Father Sturzo who in THE TRUE LIFE states "The choice in the quest of good is not between the natural plane and the supernatural, but between the good rendered supernatural by grace and the semblance of a natural good, which is not really good inasmuch as it is not even in accordance with rational nature. The purely natural good can only by abstraction be isolated from human action, as a possibility, a hypothetical relationship; whereas the supernatural good is the concrete reality of all those who feel the divine vocation and follow the impulse of grace. There is no third road."

Of "purely natural acts" Father Sturzo declares "if such practises (virtues) do not pass from the natural to the supernatural, they will increase our vanity and pride in a more subtle and treacherous form, producing moral self-complacency and even self-worship." As I understand it Father Sturzo would regard as supernatural acts many such that are commonly regarded as exclusively natural. In which I strongly agree with him.

Our friend is essentially in agreement, though he interprets it differently, for he states "if human life were brought into conformity with the natural law, it would prepare the way for the acceptance of revealed truth . . . in the meantime Catholics can form communities where conditions permit, in which all humanly possible is done to keep the whole groups on a public supernatural level, thus hastening the spread of the gospel."

I would not confine such communities to formal members of the Church and I would insist they must steer clear of theocracy and respect freedom. But they would be a step towards the society envisaged by Christian anarchism. On the basis of the unconscious natural desire of all men for the supernatural—a desire that can be brought into consciousness—it is imperative that natural systems approach as far as possible to what would be if grace were a conscious entity in the social order.

It is my contention that this would lead in the direction of Christian anarchism rather than that of State socialism or the Welfare State or liberalistic "democracy."

DAVID HENNESSY

THE DISTRIBUTIST BOOKSTALL STOTLERS CROSS ROADS, W. VA.

Books on Distributism and the Catholic Land Movement

1. Sun of Justice, the distributist manifesto by H. Robbins . . . \$2.00
2. Rural Rides by Wm. Cobbett . . . 1.50
3. The Restoration of Property, a sequel to the Servile State by H. Belloc50
4. The Importance of Rural Life, according to the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, by Rev. G. H. Speltz . . . 2.25
5. The Return to Husbandry, essays on the Natural Order by H. J. Marsingham . . . 1.75
6. Flee to the Fields, a symposium by the Catholic Land Movement . . . 2.00
7. The Failure of Technology, perfection without purpose, by F. G. Juenger . . . 2.75
8. Man the Unknown by A. Carrel75
9. Rich and Poor in Christian Tradition by Walter Shewring . . 2.50
10. Sacred and Secular, eight essays, includes, ownership and industrialism by Eric Gill . . . 2.75
11. Reclamation of Independence by Willis Nutting . . . 3.00
12. Your Daily Bread, in defense of the whole grain loaf by Doris Grant . . . 1.00
13. Old Principles and the New Order by Vincent McNabb, O.P. . . . 3.75
14. A Distributist Handbook by Graham Carey75
15. What's Wrong with the World by G. K. Chesterton . . . 1.00
16. Flight from the City by Ralph Borsodi . . . 2.75
17. Decentralize for Liberty by Thomas Hewes . . . 3.00

Restitution

(Continued from page 1)

realities of day-to-day living to them are rent, bread, and babies, and they follow those who practice the corporal works of mercy of feeding the hungry and sheltering the homeless, and the spiritual works of mercy of instructing the ignorant, and comforting the sorrowful. It has always been so. Every revolution is the conquest of bread, and it led by the lovers of the poor. Political complexions change, but the dynamism of human nature remains the same—hunger for bread and for love.

Jacques Maritain wrote: . . . "the day when, in the course of modern history, a particularly inhuman structure of society, caused by the industrial revolution, made the problem of social justice manifestly crucial; when, at the same time, the human mind became aware of the social as a specific object of knowledge and activity, and when the first attempts to create workers' organizations provided the beginnings of a historical force capable of acting upon social structures—then should not saints have taken the lead in the protest of the poor and of the labor movement toward its historical coming of age? . . . except for a few men of faith . . . the task, as we know, was not led by saints. It even happened that atheists, instead of saints, took the lead in social matters, much to the misfortune of all."

Although the Industrial Revolution helped build an inhuman structure of society, as Maritain says, we must remember that the structure was already inhuman. Both in the Industrial Revolution and in the merchant and landed economies that went before it, the basic social problem was the problem of the ownership of property. The stumbling block that held back the Industrial Revolution as a help to the worker was the false premise that the benefits of labor-saving machinery accrued to the owner instead of the workers, who should be the owners, again a question of property. It is a false premise of our modern economy, too.

Stolen Goods

At least nine-tenth of the property of the world is stolen goods, and restitution is demanded and restitution is demanded every place. "The historic task of the twentieth century," wrote Kropotkin, "is expropriation."

"Whatsoever things are true . . . whatsoever just . . . whatsoever lovely, whatsoever of good fame, if there be any virtue . . . think on these things," St. Paul wrote. The protest of the poor in Italy seems to us true, just, lovely, of good fame, and filled with much virtue. Let all people of good will lend a hand in it, that the peasant and the worker, be not in the end betrayed by bureaucracy or new privileged classes or fratricidal war. For "I saw a new heaven and a new earth."