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# OUR CATHOLIC LIFE

*A Quarterly Magazine of the Diocese of Limerick under the Patronage of His Lordship, Most Reverend Henry Murphy, D.D.*

Editor ..... REV. DANIEL GALLAGHER.  
Assistant Editors ..... REV. MICHAEL TYNAN.  
REV. PATRICK HOULIHAN.  
Art Editor ..... MR. PATRICK McEVoy.

CHRISTMAS, 1960

## AIDS TO ADJUSTMENT

WRONG doing by children and adolescents is always 'news' and there are many who feel that juvenile delinquents get off too lightly in our courts. The safeguarding of the community may suggest punishment but the welfare of the child and adolescent, whose delinquency may be traced in part at least to the community, must also be considered. Judges must always remember that the longest prison sentence or the longest stay in an approved institution will come to an end and the questions always remain—how will the individual re-act when he returns to the community? Will he be more anti-social and delinquent than before?

The process of converting prisons for juveniles into schools and training establishments is already well under way in most countries. However, the opinion that the approved school or institution is as out of date as the prison is now gaining strong support.

There will always be need for a few closed institutions for the deeply disturbed juvenile, the recidivist and the dangerous offender, because society is entitled to be protected from him. Even in these institutions great importance must be attached to the preparation of the adolescent for the transition to ordinary life on release. In the case of maladjusted or psychopathic juvenile treatment should consist of a planned therapeutic environment, with individual psychotherapy in certain cases. As anti-social behaviour is often the result of social conditions, incorrect training and so forth, emphasis should be placed on education and character training. The latter should include development of social responsibility and good work habits. To avoid isolating institutional training from ordinary life and to facilitate future adjustment participation in the social life of the local community should be encouraged.

In most institutions some kind of vocational training is always provided but to secure real successful training for employment there should be vocational guidance which takes into account individual abilities and interests. When an institution lacks sufficient equipment and facilities for training in a variety of trades use should be made of

'outside' facilities for training. This of course would demand the closest co-operation with the employment of labour. The importance of after care and the finding of suitable employment for the juvenile on release scarcely needs to be stressed.

Despite the advance in modern methods of training juvenile delinquents, the inevitable separation from the family, the restriction of personal freedom and the social stigma attached to ex-pupils of closed institutions make adjustment difficult. Because of this it is desirable that the Probation Service should be expanded and improved in quality by the employment of well trained and adequately paid personnel. This would mean the return of the delinquent to his home conditional on good behaviour for a definite period of time and subject to probational observation. The probation officer should work in full co-operation with various community organisations such as youth clubs, which offer programmes of organised leisure and provide helpful contacts, vocational guidance bureaux, mental health clinics and employment agencies.

When the home is unsuitable an effort should be made to commit the delinquent to a fit person or foster family, again subject to good behaviour and probational observation. Another possibility is the establishment of semi-open type of probation hostel on the lines of Boys' Town.

However, the penal system can never hope to control the volume of crime. Juvenile delinquency to-day is the rebellion of youth against a disillusioned age—an age characterised by material prosperity but destitute of moral values. Youth is capable of fanatical loyalty and the real cure for delinquency is the setting up of high ideals in word and practice by the family, the local community and the nation. Theirs is the task, under God, of giving youth an appreciation of the spiritual nature and the supernatural destiny of man and of living up to that nature and destiny.

BEANNACTA NA NOLLAG

GO RAIB AR ÁR

LEIGTEÓIRI GO LÉIR

*A Holy and a Happy Christmas  
to all our Readers*



Fr. Seamus Power has returned to his native Diocese after spending three years since his ordination in 1957 in the Diocese of Brooklyn. He has been appointed to St. John's Parish.

\*

#### OUR NEW COVER.

The new cover was designed by Mr. Lance Hogan, a student of Commercial Art in the Limerick School of Art. We are indebted to the School of Art for the invaluable assistance given to us on many occasions and in particular to the Headmaster, Mr. Patrick McEvoy, who has been Art Editor of OUR CATHOLIC LIFE since its inception.

The new cover is designed to attract the eye and remain lively during its use. This is important, as nothing becomes more tiresome than a repetitive magazine cover. The design is based on the theme of the universality of our Catholic life, and the well-known symbols of the hand and cross have been treated in a modern manner.

\*

#### ST. MUNCHIN'S PAST PUPILS' UNION.

At the annual General Meeting of the St. Munchin's Past Pupils' Union, held in November, Mr. Sean Walsh, N.T., was re-elected President for the coming year. Other elections were: Secretaries: Rev. J. Sadlier, St. Munchin's College, and Mr. Martin Pennington; Treasurer: Mr. J. C. Thompson.

# The New Maynooth Statutes

ON November 15th last the set of Church laws, that are being referred to as "The New Maynooth Statutes," came into force. They are of especial interest to the people of Ireland, because it was solely for their spiritual welfare as a nation that they were drawn up. Over four years ago, from the 7th to the 15th of August, 1956, the rulers of the Irish Church met in Plenary Council or National Synod at Maynooth College and drew up these Statutes. But they could not be published, let alone put into force, until they had been submitted to the examination of the Holy See. Thus while it was the late Pope Pius XII who appointed Cardinal D'Alton to preside over the Plenary Council as Papal Legate in 1956, it was the present Holy Father, Pope John XXIII, who commissioned him to see to the promulgation or official publication of the Statutes. On the 15th of August, 1960, the Statutes were duly published in a Joint Pastoral Letter of the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland, which was read in every Cathedral. Three months afterwards, on the 15th of November, they came into force in every diocese in Ireland. They are binding on every member of the Church in every one of the thirty two counties.

## HOW NEW ARE "THE NEW MAYNOOTH STATUTES" ?

The amount of new law in the New Maynooth Statutes is very small. This is only to be expected. It is only thirty years or so since the Statutes of the previous Plenary Council of 1927 were put into force. The work of the recent Plenary Council was for the most part a matter of revising the previous Statutes so as to bring them up to date. Nevertheless, even where they merely restate the old Statutes, the New Maynooth Statutes state them afresh, and to that extent lend a new urgency to their fulfillment.

## THE NEW STATUTES AS THEY CONCERN THE LAITY :

The scope of the New Statutes is so wide, and so much would have to be said about each individual statute to explain it fully, that nothing more than a summary of those concerning the laity can be given in these few pages. However, it may be of some interest or help to lay people to have some brief outline of the things the Statutes expect them to do. In general, the Statutes expect them to be loyal to their Church and its rulers; devoted to all their religious duties; anxious to learn all they can about their Faith; and not only blameless in their personal conduct but interested or active in the Lay Apostolate, so as best to fulfil the great Christian law of doing good to others.

The following, as briefly as possible, are the regulations or recommendations that the Statutes make under each of these five headings :

(1) *Loyalty to the Church and its rulers* : The Statutes commence with the general regulation that all the laws of the Holy See are to be religiously observed by all the faithful. Everyone should respect and appreciate the exalted office of the Pope, and enter with fervour into the annual ceremonial in his honour. Likewise, on the anniversary of their Bishop's consecration, people should go to Holy Communion and pray for his intentions.

(2) *Devotion to Religious Duties* : The primary religious duty of the faithful is to hear Mass on Sundays and Holydays of obligation ; and to abstain from servile work or business on these days, except where there is a lawful custom to the contrary. " Horse racing pony trotting, greyhound racing, coursing " and the like are entirely forbidden on a Sunday, and should not be held without the Bishop's permission on

Holydays of Obligation. Nor is it desirable that fairs and shows and the like be held on Holydays of Obligation. Care should always be taken that going to sports fixtures or public gatherings does not mean missing Mass on these days.

With regard to the reception of the Sacraments, the Statutes remind us that they should be always received with the utmost reverence. Children should be baptised as soon as possible, within ten days even in the most exceptional circumstances; and the names of local patrons and other Irish saints could be chosen more frequently in Baptism and Confirmation. Frequent and even daily Holy Communion, with careful preparation and thanksgiving, is recommended. Frequent Confession is also recommended. All are urged to join Confraternities or Sodalties, which have a rule about frequent Confession and Holy Communion. The priest should be sent for in good time to give the Sacraments to those who are sick. Far from there being anything extravagant or unbecoming about 'wakes' or funerals, the main concern should be the funeral rites of the Church, the recitation of the Rosary and other prayers and getting Mass offered for the dead person. Sacramentals, like Holy Water and blessed Medals, etc., should be made frequent use of but never superstitiously.

(3) *Knowing the Faith Better* : The familiar regulations about the religious education of children and adolescents are repeated. Parents should co-operate with priests and teachers in the matter. They should see that their sons and daughters are well instructed in the virtue of chastity, and they should never send them to non-Catholic schools.

Great emphasis is laid upon the obligation of parents to see that books, newspapers and other kinds of literature, which attack the teaching of the Church or carry sugges-

tive pictures or vivid descriptions of crime, are not brought into the house or allowed to fall into the hands of adolescents. Catholic Youth Associations are encouraged, but they must cater for religious, moral and civic formation, as well as for physical education.

There is a general reference to the need for instruction on the Sacraments and the piety and external demeanour with which they should be approached. In particular, all should learn the proper method of baptising in case of necessity; children should understand the Confirmation Pledge and renew it every year; the Spiritual Relationship contracted at Baptism and Confirmation should be better understood; the proper preparations for the administration of Extreme Unction should be learned by all. Finally, all should be instructed with regard to the Sacrament of Matrimony; warned about the dangers of Mixed Marriages and the invalidity of marriages contracted by Catholics before non-Catholic ministers or in Registry Offices; and convinced that costly display ill-becomes the sacredness of Weddings.

Nor is the influence for good or evil of books and other forms of literature overlooked. The Catholic Truth Society is greatly commended, whereas the crime of those who sell evil literature, or put it into the hands of others in any way, is to be regarded as very grave. Likewise, parents are reminded of their obligation to shield their children from films or television shows, etc., which are harmful to them.

One branch of religious knowledge that figures considerably in the Statutes is the Social Teaching of the Church. Wages should be just and decent: work should be conscientious and honest. There should be no unlawful "Lock-outs" or Unjust Strikes, particularly "Lightning Strikes" and those which affect essential community services. Rather should all disputes give way before Christian Justice and Charity, for they alone can smoothly regulate conflicting interests and secure

the common good of all. To this end, Social Study Conferences approved by the Bishop should be availed of, so that associations and groups as well as individuals may come to know the Church's Social Teaching, and put it into practice in private and public life.

(4) *Blameless in Personal Conduct*: The first of the Statutes on this topic demands that all Unlawful Societies be avoided, especially those which plot against the Church or the lawful Civil Power. The Statutes demand also that chaste habits and modesty of conduct be cultivated by all. Parents, especially mothers, should keep a careful check on the companionships of their daughters and never allow them the opportunity of lonely and dangerous company-keeping. Neither should they allow them to take part in Beauty Contests, which offend against Christian modesty. Women should be always modestly dressed, and dressed in keeping with the sacredness of the occasion, when they go to Mass and the Sacraments. Indecent plays, films, literature, pictures and the like should be abhorred by all. No one should go too often to dances or, occasional exceptions apart, to dances which go on after midnight. Catholics should have nothing whatever to do with dances which are not in keeping with Christian modesty.

Debts should be paid in a reasonable time and damage done to the property of others made good. The craving for luxury, careless management or refusal to work do not justify people in going into debt. On the contrary, they should use their resources sparingly and have some savings to meet unforeseen emergencies.

(5) *Being interested and active in the Lay Apostolate*: All are encouraged to support or join the Lay Apostolate, that is to say, those lay societies approved by the Bishop, which defend religion and the Church, create a thoroughly Catholic outlook on life or labour in any way whatever to rebuild the Christian

Social Order. Societies of this kind, that the Statutes mention as worthy of support, are Confraternities or Sodalties, Altar Societies, Church choirs, Temperance or Total Abstinence societies. Catholic Youth Associations, Social Study Groups, Catholic Emigrant Welfare Societies, The Catholic Protection and Rescue Society, the St. Vincent De Paul Society, the Legion of Mary, the Catholic Truth Society, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Lest the Lay Apostolate be discredited by the behaviour of its members, all who are active in its ranks should conform themselves in word and deed to the principles of Christian Justice.

#### A NOTABLE TRIBUTE TO THE PRESENT-DAY STATE OF RELIGION IN IRELAND:

In drawing up these Statutes, the National Synod had to bring every aspect of our religious life under review. Summing up its findings, it paid a notable tribute to the state of religion in the country at the moment. Our people's love of God and loyalty to His Church are spoken of as "worthy of the highest praise." The Synod has complimentary things to say as well about our attendance at Mass and frequentation of the Sacraments; about the cordial relations between clergy and laity, the sanctity of family life, the high standards of morality; about the wonderful expansion of our missionary effort, our consistent rejection of anti-religious influences and the growing interest in the Lay Apostolate. Two causes for concern are singled out: emigration with its spiritual dangers and the importation by modern means of communication of influences harmful to our Catholic life. But all concern about the future spiritual welfare of the Irish nation could be happily allayed, if the Irish of this generation would rise in traditional fashion to the challenge of the New Maynooth Statutes and make it more a matter of honour than compulsion to obey them.

—M.S.

# Two of the Best Farmers in Europe

By EDWARD O'CONNELL

ALL Limerick people, naturally, were delighted to hear that two West Limerick farms were the best in their respective classes at the recent Farm management competition sponsored by Macra na Feirme. By an odd coincidence both live within a few hundred yards of each other in the parish of Ardagh, and it is significant that both are young married men, each with five children.

In the competition for farms of under 50 acres, sponsored by the National Bank, Ltd., Mr. William Enright won first prize and was awarded a cash prize of £50 and a free trip to the Continent. Mr. Jerry McMahon was first in the competition sponsored by the Junior Chambers of Commerce and was awarded a cash prize of £50 for the most unique farm enterprise.

As Mr. Enright's farm is typical of the medium-sized holdings, which occupy a considerable proportion of the country's agricultural area, it may be of interest to look at it first. The dwelling house is one of those lovely thatched farm houses, which, perhaps because they were built of native materials seem to grow out of Irish soil and blend beautifully into the landscape. Travellers from Newcastle West to Limerick will have noticed this neat snug farmhouse nestling in the fertile fields to the left of the line beyond Ardagh Station. It was indeed a pleasure to visit this hospitable farm home and to meet Mrs. Bridie Enright and the five handsome children—Neall, Helen, Ann, Geraldine and Paddy, ranging from 8 years to 3 years, and all except the youngest going to school in Ardagh.

Mr. Enright farms 40 acres, of which 3 are waste. As in most West Limerick soils the land is rather heavy, but fertile, as evidenced by a rather high Poor Law Valuation



The Enright family

of well over £1 per acre. The emphasis is on dairying and most of the farm is, of necessity, under grass; but what good grass it is can be gauged from the fact that it carries a heavy yielding cow on 1½ acres. As the examiners put it, "His excellent use of grassland was one of the outstanding features of his farming." To maintain a high output from grass it is necessary "to take the plough round the farm" and the area under tillage is more than twice the Limerick average. In addition to potatoes, three acres of high yielding feeding barley are

grown for pig feeding and there were three acres of beet seed. This Mr. Enright finds to be a valuable crop with the output fluctuating between £30 and £150 per acre.

The farm carries 20 cows and all calves are sold within a week or so of birth. The creamery return shows an average yield per cow of 750 gallons. Add to that the milk used for the family and for calf rearing and you get an average yield of 800 gallons.

The criterion of efficiency is not, however, so much the yield of milk per cow as the yield per acre. The

acreable yield of milk on this farm was over 400 gallons. The output, to put the matter in a nutshell, would do credit to any Model Farm in the country. In Co. Limerick, with the highest acreable output of milk in Ireland, the acreable yield is 120 gallons. Comparatively recent figures for the acreable output of cattle and milk in Denmark, show a return of £27. Mr. Enright's return was £34.

In addition to milk production, this farm has shown the possibilities of pig production. Pig and poultry production is the great stand-by of the family farm in Denmark. And it ought to be here. From the progeny of seven sows, Mr. Enright sold 125 bacon pigs, 82 per cent. of which reached Grade A standard and 50 per cent Grade A special. The total output of pigs reached the high total of £45 per acre. On the average dairy farm the output, as shown in Farm Survey, is £4 per acre. On some of the cattle farms it is less than £2.

Commonsense will suggest that this high output could not be achieved without purchased foods. It is, in fact, with purchased raw materials that the Danish small farms achieve the high output. On the Enright farm, in addition to the produce of three acres of barley, purchased foods cost £960.

It needs no economist to estimate the importance of the expenditure to creameries, shopkeepers and neighbouring grain producers. In addition to high expenditure on raw materials there was, significantly, very high expenditure on hired labour. One man and one girl were permanently employed and another man was employed for six months. The actual expenditure on hired labour was equivalent to £10 an acre. On farms of similar size in Denmark the expenditure was £8. Over the whole range of Danish farms the amount paid to hired labour varies from £3 to £12 an acre.

On Irish farms generally the ex-

penditure on hired labour, varies from 10/- on the smallest to £2 10s. per acre on the largest. The pattern of Irish farming as a whole, geared as it has been for a century to a high export trade in cattle, is a system with a low input of materials and a small labour content, and consequently with rather undesirable social implications. It is in the light of its high economic labour content that the social significance of Mr. Enright's fine effort must be seen.

The figures for the McMahon's farm are even more striking. Time did not permit a visit to his home, but Mr. McMahon very kindly gave me access to the returns. On this 11 acre farm he achieved the amazing high total output of £1,430, an average output of £130 per acre, seven times the national average. On the Enright farm the acreable output was five times the national average of £18. What is more significant is that both farms doubled the Danish average output and must therefore rank amongst the best in Europe. The output of milk and cattle on the McMahon farm was £17. The output from pigs reached the almost unbelievably high total of £110 an acre. The whole achievement reflects the highest possible credit on the owner.

On these two Ardagh farms with a combined area of 50 acres, not only were two large families well provided for, but the staggering total of £50 a week was spent on Irish goods and services. In his address to the recent Muintir na Tire Congress, His Lordship the Bishop of Limerick found it necessary to deplore the continuing depopulation of the countryside. The significance of the Ardagh results is that at least they point the way to the solution of the problem. It will be perfectly obvious that for a hundred and one different reasons all farms cannot achieve the same high output. Nor are they expected to. If we could, however, even double the national average, that is, to reach in the whole country an acreable out-

put of £36, or to put it more simply, an output of two shillings an acre per day, a standard that has already been reached on hundreds of Limerick farms, we would not only have surpassed the Danish total but would multiply our agricultural exports by four and be on the high road to a solution of the problem of emigration. That cannot be accomplished without the widespread development of that managerial capacity of the high order shown in Ardagh. Obviously the problem is largely a human problem.

Constant and purposeful effort must replace dull routine. As a people we find too many alibis for the failure to exercise our minds or hands and we tend to confuse high economic efficiency with materialism, when in reality the boot can be put on the other foot. The high economic efficiency on the Ardagh farms is nothing more or less than traditional Irish farming at its best. And it was achieved without interfering in any way with the charm of the Irish way of life.

What the results do show is a clear concept of the meaning of freedom, and a high appreciation of the vocation of work. The purpose of political freedom and in fact of the Land War was, after all, to release men for activity rather than inactivity. "Patriotism," says the founder of Sinn Féin, "is not a thing of loud professions of loyalty and willingness to die for Ireland at some future date." Neither does it consist of empty emotional outbursts. In our present situation it is the practical realisation of our aspirations and amongst these—enshrined in our Constitution and in the code of Catholic social principles—is the maintenance of the small family farm. For that these men are in the nation's debt and their achievements must remain a lasting monument to high endeavour.

\*

*Definition of an Egotist : A person who is always letting off esteem.*

# Things I've Been Reading...

## on moods and methods

When five-year-old Paul Levy of Johannesburg came home in a difficult mood from nursery school recently and got a mild spanking from his mother, he went straight to the telephone and dialled 30—the local equivalent of 999.

"Come at once to 99 Third Avenue, Highlands, North Johannesburg," he piped into the mouthpiece.

A few minutes later a flying squad sergeant knocked at the front door. Paul had rung up the flying squad number impressed on him by his mother's servant girl.

"What made you do it?" demanded Mrs. Rhoda Levy of her small son when they were alone again. "I wanted the flying squad to see what kind of a mother I've got," replied Paul.

—from *The Evening Herald*.

## on being and doing

Powers said he thought Cardinal Spellman had paid a visit.

Mr. Rudenko: "So Spellman is also interested in military bases?—I would say he is interested in military personnel, not bases.

Personnel which carry out spy flights?—I don't think he would think too much of what a person does, but of what a person is."

—from a newspaper report.

## about robots

Man's age-long quest for robots to do his work for him risks turning man himself into a sort of robot.

This is the gloomy conclusion of scientists addressing the British Association at Cardiff.

Unthinking exploitation of science to improve our 'standard of living' tends merely to replace physical drudgery by mental drudgery, said Dr. James Taylor.

To point the moral, delegates were shown a Canadian documentary film, "The Man on the Assembly Line," produced at McGill University, Montreal.

A dramatic sequence traced the gradual mental breakdown of an intelligent factory worker after nine years tightening bolts on an assembly line making cars.

This man did a 'robot' job in a factory where men were no more important than rivets. Ultimately he lost his mental balance.

—Denis Weaver, reporting in *The Daily Dispatch*.

## on Mother Morrison

Her death occurred after a mercifully short attack of bronchitis. I was nineteen and felt the loss perhaps more deeply than I would have at a younger age. She was a good and gentle woman, always disguising from her family the problems she must have had in looking after a lot of children on very little money. I recall how she used to beckon me to her when, as a small boy, I came home from school on a wintry afternoon, and nestle my hands, aching and blue from cold under her forearms to warm them.

—*An Autobiography* by Lord Morrison of Lambeth.

## and Mother Truman

During her last illness, our old chaplain went to see her and, hoping to cheer her up, said: "Mrs. Truman, you must be very proud that a son of yours is in the White House."

After thinking it over for a minute, she said: "Well, yes, but I have got another son who lives down the road a piece—and I'm just as proud of him."

—*Mr Citizen Truman* by Harry S. Truman.

## good taste in dress

If women dressed with ordinary modesty and good taste, they should have no difficulty in preserving human dignity.

In modern society, there is a bias in favour of pleasure and bodily beauty. Some fashions betray that bias and women who dress for the sole purpose of showing their bodily beauty are following that bias. Women should dress in such a manner as to bring respect to their person rather than the mere admiration of the bodily form.

The body should not be stressed to the detriment of the soul and to dress for merely bodily attraction degrades and brings down the value of womanhood because she is drawing attention to her figure rather than to the person to whom the figure belongs.

—FR. THOMAS MCINTYRE, S.J., at Knock Shrine.

## on juvenile crime

Crime among youth is encouraged and nurtured by the increasing emphasis of our society upon not only materialism, but upon materialism without effort.

—Chief of Los Angeles Police, as quoted by Ian Fleming in *The Sunday Times*.

## and a timely warning

Parents should take great care to ensure that children and adolescents do not frequent cinema or television shows injurious to the young, or pick up in foreign periodicals ideas about right and wrong that are opposed to the teaching of the Church.

—Decrees of the Maynooth Synod, 119,2.

## THIS IS ROME

A Pilgrimage in Words and Pictures.

Conducted by FULTON SHEEN.

Photographed by YOUSUF KARSH.

Described by H. V. MORTON.

Published 1960.

From the nine page introduction by Bishop Sheen, right on through the brilliant text of H. V. Morton, with one of Yousuf Karsh's fifty full page photographs facing each other page, this book is a pleasure for the mind and to the eye.

The Rome of the Caesars, of the Apostles, of the Pilgrims, the Rome of to-day, are all presented to us in the style that one expects from those Masters of their respective crafts. For anyone who might be thinking about giving a Christmas present in terms of book tokens, here is something worth considering.

\*

## SEEKING THE CITY

A Spiritual Autobiography, 134 pps.

By EDWARD CHARLES RICH.

Published 1959.

## THE ONE TRUE KIRK

By RONALD WALLS.

156 pps. Published 1960.

Most people are now aware that an increasing number of clergy from non-Catholic denominations in Britain are every year entering the Catholic Church. In nearly every case such a step requires great courage and strength of will. Not merely is there a sharp and often permanent break with a whole circle of friends and relatives, but frequently the man's chances of earning a decent living in any other walk of life may be slight enough.

If added to all this there is the responsibility of providing for a wife and family, who perhaps do not share the intending convert's viewpoint, the situation is still more grim.

Edward Rich was an Anglican

# BOOKS

By REV. J. O'BEIRNE, C.C.

*Available in the City and  
County Libraries.*

\*

Canon of Peterborough Cathedral in England. Ronald Walls a Presbyterian minister in the Highlands of Scotland.

The Anglican was not always an Anglican. His life-story gives us a most varied background of religious beliefs. In his youth the future Canon came under the influence of such diverse groups as Welsh Revivalists, Plymouth Brethren, the Society of Friends, and finally the Church of England.

From early manhood until middle age he was a priest of the Anglican Church. Canterbury Cathedral, Christ Church College, Oxford, and a London parish all played a part in the twenty years spent thus.

From start to finish of this book one gets the impression of a story told with disarming candour and simplicity. But, be it noted, there is all the time evident the solid learning and scholarship of the author.

Whether one looks at it as a document of moving human interest, or the gradual revealing of a great truth to an earnest and inquiring mind, *Seeking the City* stands high in its own class.

Ronald Walls, sometime Presbyterian minister, has for a background, not Canterbury and Oxford, but Edinburgh and the Highlands.

This is a delightfully written life story, full of quiet humour. One is reminded here and there of Canon Sheehan's *Luke Delmege* or *My New Curate*. While the style is easy and readable all through, one is never allowed to lose sight of the fact that for this man too, the search for Truth dominates his life.

For him his big decision results in leaving his manse, and with his wife and three small children boarding a train for Edinburgh and a search for work.

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## ST. ANTHONY AND HIS TIMES

By MARY PURCELL, 238 pps.

Published 1960.

Those saints who grip the popular fancy often suffer the fate, as time goes on, of having their characters and deeds distorted by exaggeration.

To quote the author of this book: "The holy need no artificial aids to make their sanctity more attractive. Others may fear the bright beam of truth. The saints never."

Such always is the keynote of Miss Purcell's approach to recording the lives and times of the different saints she has written about. With St. Anthony, as with the others, her method has resulted in another first-class biography, founded on well documented facts. She puts in its proper perspective, as only the trained historian can, the Europe of that time, the thirteenth century, when Popes and Emperors, Crusaders and Turks, Heretics and Missionaries, all played their parts on a stage that never failed to be brimful of incident. Through it all, Anthony of Lisbon and Padua, "beloved by God and by men" is seen playing the part destined for him by Providence.

The early years spent in obscurity and study of the Scriptures prepared him spiritually and intellectually for his life work of teaching, evangelising and preaching. As he moved to and fro across Italy and France, the problems that beset the faithful were all dealt with in sermon after sermon. While the high-lights of his career were, perhaps, miracles, yet that which endeared him to men was his faithful carrying out of the ideal of St. Francis:

"To go forth as Heralds of the Great King, to call men to repentance through the preaching of the Gospel."

# Limerickmen Of The Future

## An Analysis of the Primary School Population of the Diocese

By REV. JEREMIAH NEWMAN, M.A., D.Ph.  
*Maynooth College.*

STATISTICS on the Catholic school population of the Diocese have recently been made available to me through the courtesy of the Diocesan Inspector, Fr. M. Tynan. They have prompted a few reflections which may be of interest. The figures as supplied cover the period 1919 to 1959, the actual numbers being given for each tenth year. For the purpose of the present article those for 1919, 1939 and 1959 will suffice. All elementary schools in the diocese are included, with the exception of the primary schools in the Crescent College and Laurel Hill Convent and the schools attached to the Foynes and Croom Children's Hospitals. In a few instances where the number for 1919 was not available, the nearest on the records is given.

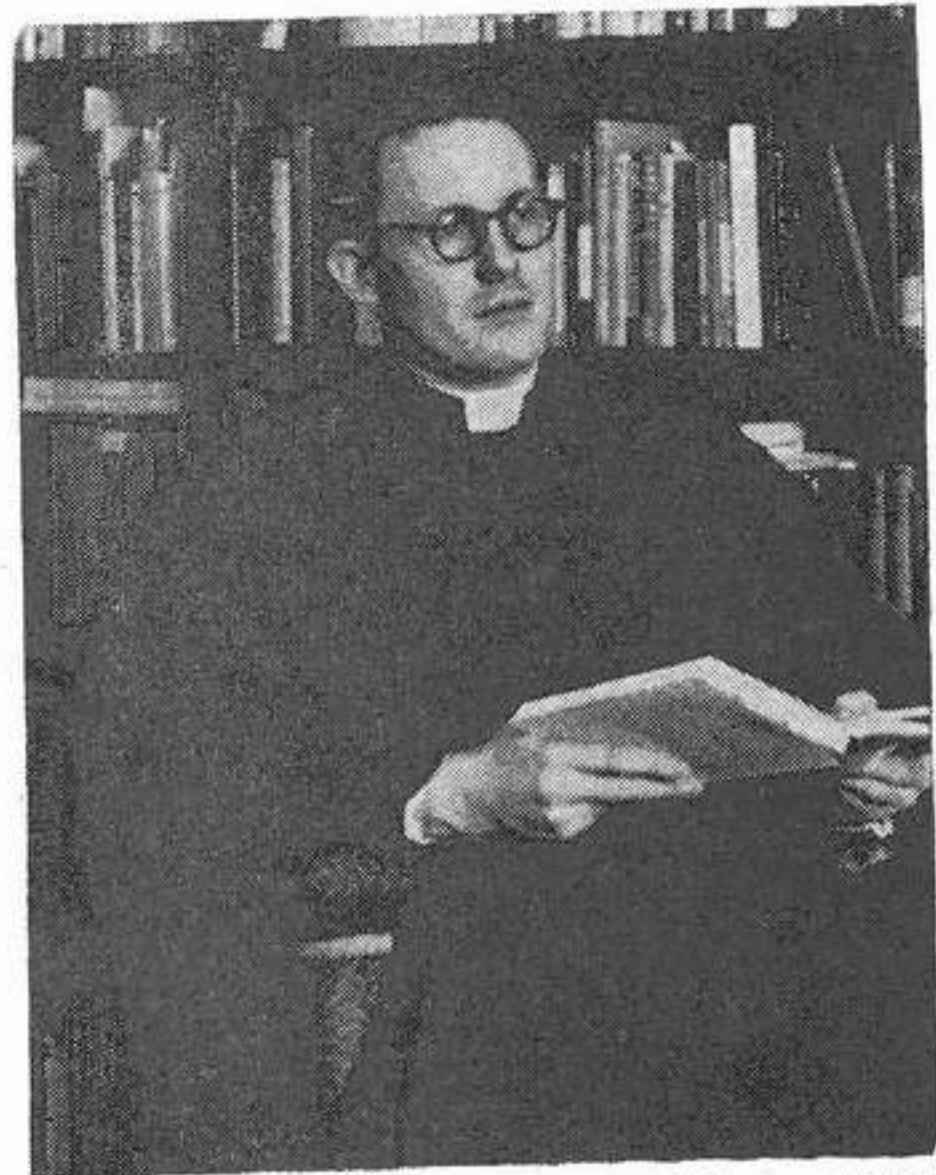
The over-all figures for the diocese as a whole register an increase—from 19,782 in 1919 to 21,559 in 1959. Closer inspection, however, shows that this increase has not been uniform. It is characteristic of the city rather than of the county areas. Thus:

	1919	1939	1959
City ...	6850	8096	10268
County ...	12932	11558	11291

Further break-down of these figures for the Deaneries (diocesan divisions) reveals the steep decline which has occurred in most rural areas as contrasted with the growth in the city.

	1919	1939	1959
Limerick City...	7786	9103	10511
Newcastle West	2547	2263	2120
Bruff ...	1400	1229	2091
Rathkeale ...	1842	1843	1688
Kilmallock ...	2120	1825	1683
Shanagolden ...	1914	1667	1790
Abbeyfeale ...	2173	1724	1676

Analysis of the city figures shows that they reflect the extensive development of suburban housing estates which has taken place since 1919. While the numbers for some of the older central city parishes remain relatively unchanged (e.g., St. Mary's, which had 1213 primary school children in 1919 and 1450 in 1959, and St. Michael's, for which the respective figures are 3518 and 4426), and while some have even declined (e.g.,



Dr. J. Newman, who is a native of Dromcollogher, was ordained for the Limerick Diocese in 1950. He was appointed Professor of Sociology in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, in 1953. He is author of several books on Philosophy and Sociology.

St. John's from 1637 in 1919 to 1174 in 1959), the peripheral parishes show significant increase. Most of this has been in St. Munchin's parish, whose numbers have gone from 271 to 2157 since 1919 (an increase of nearly 1000%). Small but notable increases, relative to the size of their populations, have also occurred in the case of St. Patrick's (from 341 in 1919 to 465 in 1959), Mungret (285 to 316) and Parteen (194 to 216)—all of which are contiguous to the city and have experienced some influx of new residents during the past forty years. Donaghmore parish, also bounding the city and containing the new Janesboro' residential area, increased from 195 to 907 in the same period.

Some of the increase in the suburban parishes is undoubtedly due to the clearance of slum areas, which is also the reason for the decline in the city centre. But there has been a certain influx of people from country areas, which made for some expansion of the city population, including that of the schools. The Report of the Commission on Population (1954) did not list County Limerick amongst the eleven Irish counties with high emigration, with the result that many people have supposed that Limerick is holding its own in the matter of population. This is the case if the figures for the city and country areas are taken together, but inspection of the country figures taken in themselves shows a decline. This is re-

flected in the figures for the rural schools.

Compared with the city figures, those for the country are not encouraging. The vast majority of the country parishes show a decline, some of considerable proportions. Thus, to take a few examples, Kilmeedy has declined from 328 (1919) to 285 (1959), Monagea from 159 to 106, Cappagh from 106 to 57, Ballingarry from 373 to 271, Tournafulla from 370 to 271, Ardpatrik from 110 to 88, Bruree from 327 to 272, Bulgaden from 330 to 193, Effin from 151 to 87, Kilfinane from 340 to 189, Coolcappa from 224 to 179, Glin (excluding the industrial school figures) from 496 to 437, Abbeyfeale from 1108 to 808 and Dromcollogher from 455 to 373.

A few country parishes show increases,—e.g., Croom from 204 to 251, Dromin from 159 to 183, Adare from 271 to 310, Kilmallock from 418 to 454, Croagh from 117 to 154, Kildimo from 233 to 270. Shanagolden from 416 to 455 and Askeaton from 268 to 318. The rural parishes of Banogue and Manister show very slight increases.

It is not always easy to discern the reasons for increases and decreases. Sometimes one feels that decrease is related to the setting up of a secondary school or vocational school in a parish. During the past decade or more there has certainly been a tendency for pupils to move off earlier to secondary schools and vocational schools. Seventh standard is now very rare in the primary schools, so much so that a programme for this grade is no longer included in the religious syllabus. But one cannot go beyond generalisation in estimating the influence of the secondary and vocational schools on primary school attendance. It would be a mistake to attribute any particular decrease solely to the pull of secondary or vocational schools.

One might be tempted, for example, to attribute the decreases in the cases of Dromcollogher, Glin and Ballingarry to the foundation in these respective parishes of Scoil Muire (1936, with 80 pupils in 1959), An Mean Scoil Pádraig Naofa (1933-4, with 111 pupils in 1959), and Scoil Cill Shéain (1938, with 33 pupils in 1959). But it would be a grave error to find the total cause here. The parishes of Askeaton, Shanagolden and Kilmallock have increased their primary school numbers despite the setting up of Scoil Muire (Askeaton, 1942-3, with 61 pupils in 1959), Scoil Shenáin (Foynes, 1940-1, with 34 pupils in 1959), and Scoil San Seosamh (Kilmallock, about 1930, with 90 pupils in 1959). These figures for secondary schools can be found in the School and College Year Book for 1960. They indicate that while the introduction of a secondary and/or vocational school has undoubtedly accounted for some of the decrease in a place like Abbeyfeale (where three secondary schools have been opened

since 1919), this is by no means an exclusive explanation in every case of decrease.

On the other hand, in the case of some other parishes whose figures record an increase, e.g., Adare, this may be due merely to the inclusion of some 'secondary top' pupils. But again, we must not see the full answer for the increases in this factor. I merely suggest that it may possibly be relevant in some cases. In others it is possible that the maintenance of primary school numbers is due to some extent to remoteness from secondary schools. But increases, in certain cases, are puzzling. It should be noted, of course, that, after the School Attendance Act of 1926, there should have been an increase of attendance all round. One might have expected the same result from the tendency to send children to school at an earlier age than was customary formerly.

The fact that such increase has but rarely occurred must be related to the general decline in the rural population of the diocese. It would be interesting if we could compare the general population trend in each parish, or even deanery, with that of the school population. This is difficult to do as the civic census figures are based, not on the ecclesiastical divisions, but on Dispensary Districts and their Electoral Divisions. Still, a glance at any of these shows continuous decline in the general population. The following are the figures for the Electoral Divisions of one sample Dispensary District, that of Bruree.

	1926	1946	1956
Bruree ...	908	845	820
Colmanswell	636	547	508
Dromin ...	658	623	574
Rockhill ...	495	455	384

But we cannot be certain that we have covered all the factors related to the decrease in rural primary school numbers if we include such correlation with rural depopulation. It is also possible that there has been some decline in fertility. The following are the national figures for the average number of births per 1,000 married women, between the ages of 15 and 44, during the period under review. They are derived from the Report of the Commission on Population.

1910-12	1935-37	1950-52
305	256	248

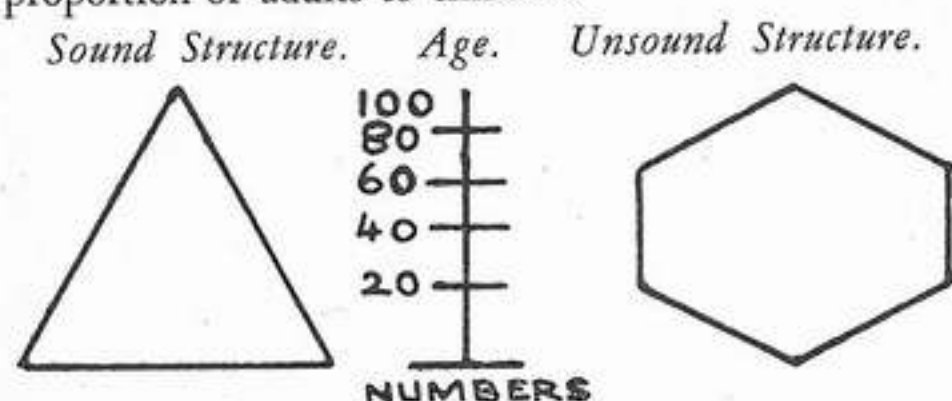
These figures, which incidentally are higher than those for any other country in Western Europe except Portugal, are disquieting in so far as they show that decline has set in in fertility itself. In this connection, however, I would like to point out an interesting fact regarding fertility in rural Limerick. It concerns the county as a whole and not merely the diocese. An examination of the national census figures for 1951 shows that rural Limerick has a

higher fertility rate than rural Munster as a whole. The evidence is contained in the following figures for child population related to the number of married women (aged 15 to 44).

	Rural Munster.	Rural Limerick
Children under 14 ...	159,016	26,313
Married Women ...	44,167	6,990
Children per married woman ...	3.60	3.76

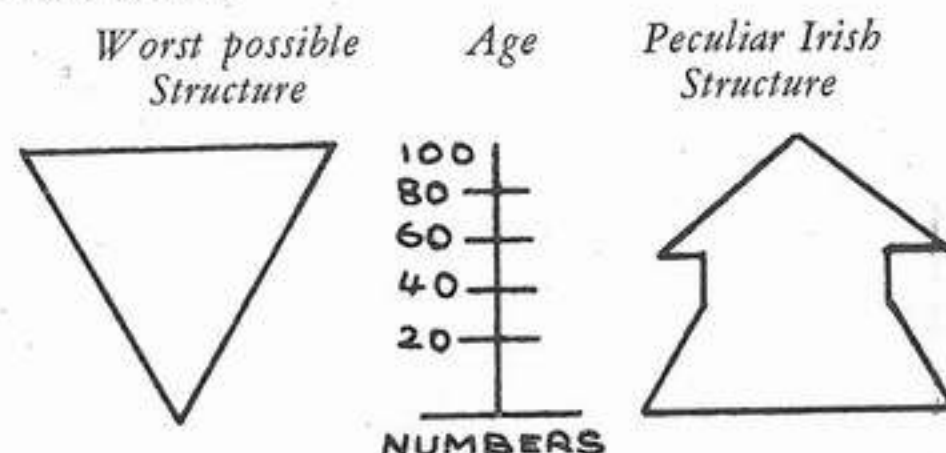
If the birth rate for rural Limerick were the same as that for rural Munster in general, we should expect a figure of 25,166 children. As we see, the number was actually 26,313, which marks a considerable difference. As a result, we are not surprised to find that the proportion of children (aged 10 to 14) in the total population of rural Munster is 27.76% and of rural Limerick 30.48%. Though the matter is complex, this analysis cannot be dismissed lightly. It shows the variations that can exist within the same *country* and argues to the conclusion that such local peculiarities extending to an area as large as a county, merit further investigation. It also suggests the possibility that the puzzling increases in some primary school numbers referred to earlier may be due to variations in fertility even as between parishes within the same *county*. Of course small increases can be due to the impact of a few large families. But large or constant increases may be related to better general fertility. If this were so, it would be of immense interest and importance from the point of view of the sociologist.

Although the earlier evidence of decrease in rural population is a cause for disquiet, we can take heart from the last mentioned figures. Children alone ensure the future of a population; where there are many children a people will survive. Population experts say that a sound population structure may be illustrated graphically by a triangle, the broad base of which represents the youngest age group, the apex the oldest, with the others in between. Due to its falling birth rate (until recently), the structure of the population of Britain has departed from this and is now in the unsound position of having a much too great proportion of adults to children.



Clearly if the trend towards an ever lower birth rate continued, a population would end up with the

worst possible structure, the inverse of what it should be, and would eventually even disappear if it did not receive a transfusion of people through immigration. Our still relatively high birth rate in Ireland should ensure that this will not happen here. Unfortunately, our very high emigration in the age group 15 to 30, causes our population structure to tend to assume a most peculiar—indeed unique—structure that is far from sound.



Because of the gaping hole which it leaves in the younger age groups, our emigration pattern is such that it could reach a rate at which it would mean that the population would be unable to replace itself. I greatly fear that this is happening in some of our rural communities. If this is so, these are destined to disappear unless bold and imaginative new thinking and action come to the rescue. For which reason we should heed the words of His Lordship the Bishop at the recent Muintir na Tire convention at Effin: "Rural depopulation is a challenge to be faced, as our ancestors faced the challenge of famine and rack rents."

## LIMERICK DIOCESAN PILGRIMAGE

— TO —

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Most Rev. Henry Murphy, D.D.)

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9th—19th AUGUST, 1961

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# St. Gabriel Of Our Lady Of Sorrows

By REV. PETER WHITE

OF the modern saints, perhaps Saint Gabriel Possenti or Saint Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows is very little known to many of us. Some readers have scarcely ever heard of him and yet his was a life that would appeal to many of our boys and girls of to-day. He was yet in his twenties when he died and was canonised by Pope Benedict XV in the year 1920. He was not a priest but a student studying for the priesthood, a member of the Passionist Congregation.

## His Early Days

Assisi is always associated with the lives of Saints Francis and Clare. Even to-day a visitor to that city will scarcely hear from the lips of the citizens that it was in their city of Assisi that Francis Possenti was born in 1838. He was the eleventh child of a family of thirteen. His parents were devout Catholics and his father held an administrative post in the government of the Vatican States. At the age of four Francis' mother died and the children's upbringing was left in the hands of their father, who had just been appointed registrar of Spoleto, one of the States of the Church. It was at the local Christian Brothers' School that Francis received his elementary education and from there proceeded to the Jesuit Fathers for his secondary course. At school he was a brilliant student and gave no signs to his classmates of being a saint. In fact he was a regular visitor to the theatre and was noted for his gaiety. Books, too, he liked to read and was most correct in his dress and personal appearance. Being of a warm and friendly nature, he was popular with his fellow-students and his company was anxiously sought after.

In spite of his life of gaiety, Francis had a great devotion to Our Lady and was never absent from the family rosary.

## A Promise

Towards the end of his school-days, Francis became dangerously ill and there was little hope for his recovery. However, he promised if he recovered to become a priest. He did recover, but soon all thought of his promise vanished. He was struck with a second illness and again after renewing his promise to become a priest he was again restored to health. Now that he was fully restored, Francis saw no reason why he should give up the gaiety

of the world so quickly and so he went back to his former ways of living. However, the cross came to him in another form—his favourite sister died in 1855. Francis was grief stricken and announced to his father that he intended to enter the religious life. This intention was not fulfilled until a year afterward and until after another event which most certainly made it clear to him what God wanted of him. Each year the citizens of Spoleto did public homage to the miraculous image of Our Lady. The procession took place during the Octave of the Feast of the Assumption. Francis, like his fellow townspeople, was specially dressed for the occasion. They



# CHRISTMAS

were in festive attire, and the procession day was a public holiday for the citizens of Spoleto. As the image of the Virgin passed Francis in the procession, the eyes of the image seemed to be alive and staring at him. There was a look of reproach in those eyes. Mary to the mind of Francis was calling him to the religious life. Tears rolled down the young man's cheeks and this time grace had conquered. This time he was set in his resolution and the struggle was at last over. Yes, he would enter the religious life without fail. On Sunday, September 21st, 1856, Francis Possenti received the Passionist habit and was given the name of Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows.

## His Life in Religion

On the completion of the novitiate, Brother Gabriel was professed a Passionist and then at once began his studies in Philosophy. His theological studies he began at Isola. He was a good student and applied himself diligently to his studies. Writing to his brother, he says: "One of the thoughts that frighten me most in the prospect of entering the Priesthood, should God will it, is the learning necessary; and there are few days on which this matter does not set me thinking seriously. However, by God's mercy, I have studied for the past four years a little less negligently than when at home." As a student Gabriel was the admiration of all those who knew him. He was an example to his fellow religious young and old. God seemed to have taken complete possession of his soul and he radiated that goodness to all round him. He did no extraordinary things and the lesson of his life is very simple. It is this, that the means of holiness do not lie in the performance of extraordinary things but are found in the faithful doing of the ordinary duties of our state, in doing the will of God, as made known to us day by day. The outstanding feature of his sanctity was his wholehearted love of Mary the Mother of God.

*Dear Joseph, do we near the town,  
Said Mary to her spouse,  
For I am weak and would lie down,  
Pray God we'll find a house.*

*The lights of Bethlehem shone  
bright,  
And soon along each street,  
With hopes of shelter for the night,  
So wearied went their feet.*

*But at each door reply was made  
To-night we have no room;  
No place to shelter God's dear  
maid  
With Jesus in her womb.*

*Beyond the town they went their  
way  
Until among the rocks  
They found a cave where they might  
stay  
A byre for shepherds' flocks.*

Gabriel received Tonsure and the four minor orders in May, 1861. Shortly afterwards he would have received the sub-diaconate and diaconate but, due to political unrest, the ordinations were deferred. As the days of his ordination drew near Gabriel became ill and symptoms of tuberculosis were to show themselves. His superiors at once exempted him from following the arduous duties of life in a Passionist house. However, in spite of all the care bestowed upon the sick religious, the disease gained the upper hand, and on February 27th, 1862, Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows passed away peacefully.

Those of us who have not had devotion to this young saint should make an effort to become familiar with his life. We will then be filled with admiration for this saint of our own days and we will be moved to follow his example in accepting our crosses and our joys as coming from the hands of the good God. He will teach us to love and reverence the Blessed Mother of God. The teenagers, too, can take him as their model and pray to him to guide them in a choice of a vocation in life.

*And Joseph laid her on the straw  
And covered up the door,  
Then gently did the manger draw  
Beside her on the floor.*

*And there in loneliness and cold  
The infant Christ was born,  
God's gift more precious far than  
gold,  
The sun of earth's new morn.*

*The night wore on and soft the  
moon,  
Laid beauty on the scene;  
Long slender clouds it did illumine  
To drift lie silken skein.*

*To sleepy shepherds with their  
sheep  
The song of angels came;  
Its wonder roused them from their  
sleep  
To whisper Christ's sweet name.*

*They came in haste from shadowed  
fields,  
Nor heeded frightened bleat;  
Some brought white lambs their  
flocks' sweet yield.  
To lay them at His feet.*

*From far beyond the eastern rim,  
Where desert sands meet sky,  
Come kings with all their regal  
trim  
A-riding camels high.*

*They bring the treasures of far  
lands,  
That lie in mystery,  
To place them in that baby's hands  
Now cold in poverty.*

*And soon the little cave is filled  
With shepherds and kings three,  
But we must know that as God  
willed,  
There's room for you and me.*

—DANIEL J. MACAULEY.





Q. What is the difference between a Sacrament and a Sacramental?

A. The Seven Sacraments were instituted by Christ and the Church is powerless to change them; when worthily received they of themselves infallibly confer grace on those who receive them. The Sacramentals are rites instituted by the Church, which can change them at will. They do not confer grace of themselves but depend on the personal devotion of the people using them and on the Church for their efficacy.

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Q. Could God have created a better world or created this world in a better way?

A. Yes. God can create any world in any way He likes. God is omnipotent and all-wise and there is no limit to the kinds of world he might make or the ways in which he might make them.

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Q. Does a Catholic commit sin if he goes for his holidays to a place where there is no chance of hearing Sunday Mass?

A. If his choice is holidays in this particular place or no holidays then he does not sin by going there (e.g. other resorts might be beyond his means, or he is invited to stay with friends). In this case the loss of a holiday may be a serious matter for him and the Church does not wish to enforce her law. But if he has a free choice and derives no special advantage from a particular place a Catholic who chooses a place where it is impossible for him to fulfil the Sunday precept certainly sins.

# Any Questions

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Q. Is there any difference between the baptism of St. John the Baptist and Christian baptism?

A. Yes. Christian Baptism is a sacrament—it remits sin and confers sanctifying grace. The baptism of St. John was not a sacrament, and did not remit sin. It symbolised the sorrow of the Jews for their sins and their readiness to do penance.

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Q. What is really meant by the petition in the Lord's prayer "lead us not into temptation." Surely God cannot lead anyone into temptation?

A. God cannot lead us into temptation in the sense that He Himself should be the cause, making us meet occasions of sin. He can, however, and does allow circumstances to occur in which we are tempted. What we pray for is that God would keep us from circumstances in which He foresees we would fall.

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Q. Should a non-Catholic become a Catholic if by doing so he reduces his own family to poverty?

A. Yes, a non-Catholic, who is convinced of the truth of the Catholic Church, must submit to it whatever the cost to himself or others. The family have no rights contrary to the Church of God.

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Why not send your questions to *Our Catholic Life*, St. John's Presbytery, Limerick?

# A Tribute to Fr. Charles Mullins, C.C.

By THE EDITOR

TO write a short biographical note on the late Father Charles Mullins is easy. Father Mullins was born in the parish of Ardagh, County Limerick in 1918. After his primary schooling he entered St. Munchin's College in 1933 and from there he went to St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, in 1938. Having taken his B.A., L.Ph. and B.D. degrees during his course in Maynooth, he was ordained there in 1945. He spent the next three years in the Dunboyne House in Maynooth College and took the further degrees of L.C.L. and Higher Diploma in Education. In 1948 he was appointed to St. John's parish where he remained until his death on 22nd September, 1960.

To write a short appreciation of the character of Father Mullins is a much more difficult task, because one would wish to do justice to a person whom one admired as a priest, a friend and a man. I came to know Father Charlie Mullins for the first time when he entered St. Munchin's College in 1933 and in the twenty-seven years since then I have lived with him nineteen years, both as fellow-student and as a priest. It is said that to know a person one must live with him and so I may be permitted to claim that I knew Father Mullins very well. If I were asked to state what was his outstanding characteristic I would without hesitation say that it



was his integrity and uprightness. Never did I know him to do or say anything small. If he did not approve of your actions, he told you so but he did it in a manner that left no resentment. Hypocrisy in any form was completely foreign to his character. With him first things came first and his life as a priest bore testimony to that.

His was a kindly character, too. Friends will remember him best for his natural good humour and his fondness for a chat. He liked nothing better than a good argument and would be disappointed if you did not rise to his bait. He had a wealth of knowledge on many subjects, got from his wide reading, and he could quote fact after fact that left you helpless in any debate. He was most entertaining in conversation, his fund of stories was limitless and it was

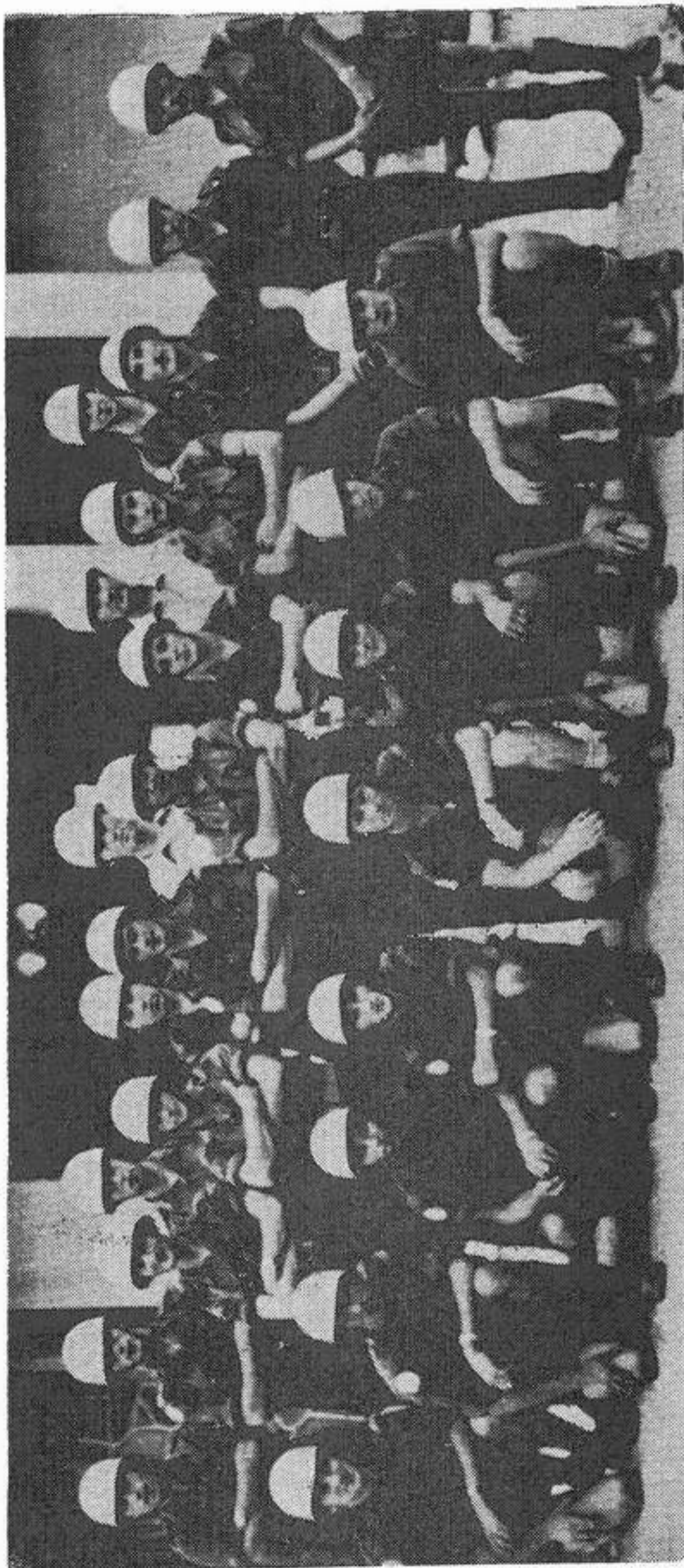
not always easy to get away from him once his spell had fallen upon you.

The manner with which he bore his final illness was typical of the man. For the twelve months prior to his death he knew that his case was hopeless but he accepted his fate with a cheerfulness and resignation that were an example to all who visited him. He could talk quite unconcernedly about death. It certainly held no terrors for him and, as someone put it to me, "he showed us how one should die." Those of us who were privileged to know him well would expect nothing less of him.

A man of great intellectual ability and of sound judgment, his untimely death has been a great loss to the Diocese of Limerick. We of *Our Catholic Life* mourn his passing in a special way as he was associated with this magazine from its very first issue. He was one of its organisers and also a regular contributor.

While writing this short and inadequate character sketch of Father Mullins I have had the feeling that his eye has been on me, amused at my efforts but warning me not to exaggerate. Yes, that would be the man—simple, humble, honest—and a great priest. No more need be added to that, and it was my privilege to know him. May his lovable soul find rest in God.

# Greetings from the congo



We are indebted to Rev. J. Shinnors, C.F., for this group of Limerick men who are serving in the Congo. They send greetings and best wishes to all their relatives and friends, and hope to see them very shortly. As Father Shinnors explained in his letter, it was not possible to include all the Limerick men as many of them were long distances away on duty, but he assures us that all are in the best of health and quite cheerful. We take the opportunity of extending our prayerful good wishes for Christmas and the New Year to all the Army members in the Congo, but in particular to our Limerick friends. We remind them that we pray constantly for their welfare and safe return to Ireland.

Front Row (left to right)—Cpl. J. O'Sullivan, Sarsfield Bks., Limerick; Pte. P. Fennessy, 77 O'Connell St., Limerick; Pte. J. Roche, 19 O'Callaghan Ave., Killeely, Limerick; Pte. M. Ward, 19 St. Brendan St., St. Mary's Park, Limerick; Pte. B. Halvey, 65 Hyde Road, Prospect, Limerick; Pte. J. McMahon, 12 Garryglass Ave., Ballinacurra-Weston, Limerick; Pte. J. Brennan, Kilmallock; Cpl. C. Ryan, 26 Griffith Ave., Ballinacurra-Weston, Limerick.

Back Row (left to right)—Cpl. G. Byrnes, 10 Monebraher Road, Ballynanty-Beg, Limerick; Pte. K. McNamara, 16 St. Columcille St., St. Mary's Park, Limerick; Pte. S. Gleeson, 29 Assumpta Park, Limerick; Pte. J. O'Malley, Sixmilebridge; Pte. J. Mitchell, Sarsfield Bks., Limerick; Pte. J. Cunningham, 20 Ballygreennan Road, Ballynanty-Beg, Limerick; Pte. G. Costelloe, 1 Moylish Road, Ballynanty-Beg, Limerick; Rev. Fr. Shinnors, C.F., Sarsfield Bks., Limerick; Pte. P. O'Connor, 71 Shanabooley Road, Ballynanty-Beg, Limerick; Pte. P. Cuddihy, 13 St. Munchin's St., St. Mary's Park, Limerick; Comdt. P. Barry, 9 Patrick St., Fermoy, O.C., B. Coy, 33rd Bn.; Cpl. P. O'Brien, Kilmallock; Pte. M. Fitzgerald, 78 St. Ita's St., St. Mary's Park, Limerick; Pte. M. Jordan, 24 Bourke Ave., off Edward St., Limerick; Pte. "Timmers" McCarthy, 15 St. Ita St., St. Mary's Park, Limerick; Sgt. W. Maher, Sarsfield Bks., Limerick.



# The Christmas Story



THE Scripture narrative of Christmas is in a way astonishingly brief. It is found only in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. (Read *Matthew* 1,25—II,12 and *Luke* II, 1-20). Both evangelists tell us of our Saviour's birth 'in Bethlehem of Judea.' From Matthew we get the story of the Magi, the Wise Men who came from the East to Jerusalem, saying, 'where is he that is born King of the Jews?' To Luke we go for the account of the Shepherds at the Crib. Mention of the birth itself is marked by that reticence in relation to the mystery of life which good men in every age regard as decent. Matthew simply says, 'She brought forth her first-born son.' Luke is no less reserved, although he tells us much besides. 'She brought forth her first-born son and wrapped Him up in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger: because there was no room in the inn.'

St. Luke is the sort of artist who creates a wonderful picture with a few strokes, lights up a whole story in a few telling phrases. Apocryphal writings in the early Christian era give imaginative accounts, one outstripping the other, of what is supposed to have occurred. Luke is the better craftsman. He tells the plain facts and leaves the rest to our imagination. And we need not let it run away with us. Perhaps they were roughly turned away from this house and that. Perhaps they were not. Who will say that the Jewish people are without compassion? There must have been some at least, some women in the crowd who watched the first journey as others were to watch the last, and would have helped a mother if they could. But what *could* they have done? Everything was in a flurry. The inns crowded. They were poor, and the poor are always waiting, always last. It is a kind of law. The Jews did not invent it.

She wrapped Him up in swaddling clothes. Something unusual here. Of course she was 'with child.' She would have taken the precaution of bringing with her the linen bands to swaddle her baby. But when the hour came, when 'the days for her to be delivered were fulfilled,' we are told she did it herself! Clearly St. Luke is more than hinting at the miraculous birth of Jesus. Mary was no ordinary mother. She was not exhausted by the labour of child-birth.

The act of laying Him in the manger is the Scriptural basis of our



knowledge of a stable. The stable of Bethlehem is not actually mentioned in the sacred narrative, only the manger; the rest is a reasonable, an inevitable deduction.

In pin-pointing the actual time of our Lord's birth, St. Luke is not so much the reticent as the careful historian; a modern historian, one might say, cautious of allowing anything to his fancy. He states precisely that moment 'in the fulness of time,' as St. Paul was to note later, when the Son of God was born into the world. 'And it came to pass that in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This enrolling was first

made by Cyrinus, the governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, every one to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife ...'

It is ironical that such careful placing of an event should have given rise to disputes among scholars, for it has been difficult to establish the evidence from other sources of this census under Cyrinus. But then the exact date of Christ's birth has been the subject of scholarly squabbles to this day. We are only able to calculate approximately: it appears to be regarded as certain that our Lord could not have been born later than the year 4 B.C.

So much for the telling. The story itself is no make-up. It is the work of our Father in heaven who so loved us as to send His only-begotten Son to redeem and save us. In this wider setting, Christmas embraces all that Jesus means to us in being our Saviour. He was shown to the Shepherds and the Magi once upon a time; and now to *me*. And as a resumé of all my thoughts this blessed season, I will take a line from Holy Writ that belongs no more to Handel than the Christmas Story does to Charles Dickens, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.'

—M.T.



## a Catholic boast

It is the boast of the Catholic Religion, that it has the gift of making the young heart chaste; and why is this, but that it gives us Jesus for our food, and Mary for our nursing mother.

—Cardinal Newman.



# Woman's page

BY MARTHA

AS one grows older one tends to become more and more retrospective. Lately, I find myself inclined to slip back into the past, revisiting, in thought, old familiar places, remembering friends of long ago. An old tune wipes away twenty years that lie between to-day and the occasion when we first danced to it. I have to be careful to refrain from alluding to "the good old days," or to that fabulous time "when I was young"—a sure indication that one is approaching the "wheel-chair" stage. Such lapses can be boring and irritating in younger listeners, and unfair, too, as they cannot contradict the speaker, as they have no first-hand experience of the golden era in question. They are compelled to listen in sulky silence while they mentally condemn the loquacious survivor from a distant past as a bore and a "square." I remember—There I go! Roll out that wheel-chair!—I remember my parents and other "grown-ups" of my young days constantly referring to the period "when they were young." The younger generation is invariably despised by the previous one, as being decadent, and lacking in morals and manners.

This nostalgic preoccupation with the past is futile and depressing. After all, to-day will be a memory in a short time, and, perhaps, in some less happy, future time we shall remember it, also, with bitter-sweet regret.

Very different from the usual prosaic recollections are those of the English poet, John Betjeman. I have just finished reading an extract from his autobiography in verse: "Summoned by Bells." Like all of us,

it is little simple things which he remembers best—"... when fire-light shone on green linoleum..."; "safe in a world of trains and buttered toast"; the "safe old bear," Archibald, his teddy-bear, "whose woollen eyes looked sad or glad to me." In his childhood he remembers all the sights and sounds that gave him a feeling of security. The word "safe" keeps recurring, and buttered toast seems to symbolise for him all the snug protectiveness of home. He remembers certain smells: the smell of London; "the early morning pipe smoke on the train"; "the laundriness of sheets." What a beautiful, evocative word—"laundriness"! It conveys the sweet smell of fresh linen, the rustle of starch, even the smooth, cold feel of freshly laundered sheets. And there are sounds which he recalls—the clamour of bells and "yellow horse-trams clapping past."

Those are the sort of trifles that remain with us through the years. It is not the moments of glory that haunt us, nor the triumphs, but little, simple, tender things remain with us for always. We recall the way the hedges smelled when we went picking primroses in the Spring, or the silver of moonlight dancing on a river—the smell of desks and chalk at school—or the red splash of firelight on the kitchen floor on dark evenings. But when we were living those days, that are only memories now, we were not conscious of the happiness that we enjoyed. In those days we were reaching out into the future. The young it is who dream, the old remember.

Christmas is nearly here. It is a time when memories come crowd-

ing in on us, and it is a time when the housewife has to keep a tight rein on her thoughts and prevent them wandering far from the turkey, the cake and the plum-pudding. She has to remain firmly anchored in the busy present, in December, 1960, in order to ensure that the rest of the family, and particularly the younger members, will have a Christmas that they, in their turn, will cherish as a memory in time to come. That is the kind of Christmas I wish you all.

I have given you no recipe this time. I am sure you have all made up your cakes by now. I have room to give a recipe for a very attractive dessert which you may care to try during the festivities.

**STRAWBERRY TRIFLE.** You will require: 6 sponge fingers (or some sponge cake); packet of jelly, any flavour; white of one egg; 2 tablespoons cream; a tin of strawberries. (There is a tin of Irish strawberries on the market for about 2/-).

**METHOD.** Split the sponge fingers and put half of them in a dish. Drain the liquid from the berries, put the fruit over the sponge, and use the liquid with a sufficient quantity of water to make a jelly. Cover the fruit in the dish with the remainder of the sponge, and pour the cold liquid jelly over the sweet and leave to set. Whip separately the cream and the egg white, then fold gently together and pile over the jelly. This should be enough to serve six persons, but if you want it to go a little further, you could add some cold stiff custard to the jelly before you pile in the egg and cream.

*Rev. J. Casey, C.C., writing on the heresies of the early Church describes them as . . .*

# Obstacles to Progress

AS has been noted the Church in its early years made rapid progress. This is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that almost from the beginning its missionary endeavour was retarded by two important factors. From within there were leanings towards heresy and from without a stream of hostile propaganda could not but bring Christianity into disrepute.

## THE FATHERS

The early Fathers were wont to compare heresy to the sin of our First Parents, calling it the Second Fall of Man. Just as the sin of the human family had darkened our understanding, so, they figured, heresy has always weakened the harmony of man's intellectual faculties. The reason is, of course, that with the destruction of the Unity of Faith come tensions and divisions which result inevitably in defections from the Church.

It is not proposed to deal in any great detail with the various heresies that afflicted the early Church, even if that were possible. A few examples may suffice to give an idea of the menace they represented, and incidentally some notion of the intellectual climate of the world in which the Church was striving to make its way.

## CAUSE OF DISUNITY

The first stirrings of disunity came from what might be called the Jewish party within the Church. Many Jews had carried into the Christian communities a deep love of their ancient rites, observances, purifications and such

like. This in itself was no great problem, but it did incline some inside the True Fold to keep on looking back over the wall. As Christians they were excessively given to "remembering Sion" and this despite more than one plain warning from St. Paul. In such an atmosphere trouble was always around the corner, and the disputes which began on matters of ceremonial and observance soon brought questions of principle and their doctrinal divergencies to the surface.

## FORMAL HERESY

Among others there were those who would put the grace of God in the service of luxury or loose living, and who were admonished by St. Peter in his Second Epistle. In like manner, St. John in the Apocalypse condemns the propagation of a teaching in Asia which permitted immorality. Its preachers claimed to be Apostles in their own right, and purported to be in the tradition of the teaching of Nicholas, one of St. Stephen's companions.

## CERINTHUS

St. John had other worries nearer home. In his own City of Ephesus a Jewish doctor named Cerinthus, in an effort to explain the origin of evil in a world of God's making, proclaimed that God was too detached from the world to have created it. In his view it was brought into being by means of an angel while another angel was commissioned to impart the Law. This latter was the God of the Jews, who strangely enough did not know the True God

nor for that matter did the Angel-Creator. At the moment of His Baptism a divine virtue or power descended on Our Lord, but this left Him at His Passion. He was thus a mere man when He died.

This perversion of Christian teaching must have been a source of great grief to the Apostle. John's disciple, Polycarp, relates that one day on entering a public bath John recognised Cerinthus. He was so disturbed that he immediately rushed out saying: "Let us fly from here lest the building collapse while Cerinthus, the enemy of truth, is within."

## DOCETES

The Docetes went even further than Cerinthus, claiming that Our Lord did not have a real body while on earth.

## GNOSTICISM

The Jewish settlers in the Mediterranean area could not possibly have avoided contact with Greek modes of thought and they for their part were inclined to compare the teachings of Moses with the speculation of such as Plato and Philo. From an effort to reconcile Christianity and pagan thought there emerged a new system which in its first edition was a sort of compromise and which bore the name of Gnosticism.

Broadly speaking the Gnostics contended that the Church had missed out the real meaning of the teaching of Our Lord. The full significance of His message could be grasped by no more than a small num-

*Continued on Page 28*

# mUIRE an CROÍ ÓRGA

Tá cáil ar Lourdes agus Fatima ar fuair an domhain agus ní ionad é. Ac ní gac duine a éuala trácta ar Deauraing agus ar taidsiú na Maigóine Muire ann i 1932-33.

Baile in oirthear na Beilge is ea Deauraing agus ar an 29ú lá de Mí Samna, 1932, a céad-taispeáin máthair Dé i féin ann do cúigear páistí — Fernando Voisin (15½), a deirfiúr Silberte (13), a deartáir Albert (11), Anoree Ogeimbre (14), agus a deirfiúr - sin Silberte (9). Oíce an lae sin éuaig ceátrár acu don clochar cun an cúigiú duine—Silberte Voisin— a tábairt abail. Tar éis do clog an dorais a baint cas Albert tarr agus ar sé do geit: “féadaigí! An Maigóean agus súna bán uirtí—tá sí ag siúl os cionn an droicé!”

“Díod ciall agat,” arsa Fernando, gan piú féadaint sa treo sin, “níl ann ac soilse gluais-teáin.”

Ac níorb ea, mar nuair a cas siad uile conaie siad an pearsa ina seasam, dar leo, ar scamall beag, agus róba bán soilseac

uirtí. Táinig eagla orthu agus énaí siad arís is arís nó go dtáinig bean rialta don doras agus Silberte Voisin lena cois.

Tosaig an ceátrár páistí ag labairt go fusaoidac léi, ac, cé go bpaca Silberte an taispeánaí, ní faca an bean rialta rud ar bi. Tug an cúigear do na cosa é, ac tit Silberte Ogeimbre, agus nuair o’féac an ceátrár eile ar a gcúl bí an fís fós ann os cionn an droicé. Rit siad leo arís nó gur bain siad teac Ogeimbre amac, ac níor deinead ac gáirí fútu nuair o’aitris siad a scéal. Ué an dála céanna é i oteac Voisin agus sa clochar.

An céad oíce eile o’imig an ceátrár don clochar arís in airicis Silberte Voisin. Agus iad ar an táirseac tálra an rud céanna. Conaie siad an taispeánaí céanna san áit céanna—fís na Maigóine ag siúl san aer os cionn droicéad an bóthair iadainn. Rit siad leo arís ac an uair seo ní raib faicíos com mór orthu. Bí Madame Ogeimbre crosta leo, ápac, nuair a éuala sí an dara cuntas uacu,

agus an céad oíce eile o’imig sí féin leo agus bata mór aici, mar ceap sí go mb’féidir go raib duine ag imirt cleasanna orthu. Don duine oéag a bí sa scata a tug aghaí ar an gclochar an oíce sin.

Cuiread na páistí ar aghaí leo féin o’fonn bob a bualaí ar an gcleasaí agus go mbéarfai air. Com luac agus éuaig siad san taob istig den geata conaie siad an Maigóean os cionn deaib Muire Lourdes. Bí gaete órga mar coróin uirtí agus bí a súile dírite ar na plaitis. Rit na páistí ar ais éuig na daoine móra agus o’imis oóib ina taob. Nuair a bí siad uile i láthair, ápac, ní raib rud ar bi le peiceáil, bíod is gur éuaroig Madame Ogeimbre an gairóin. Ac com luac agus táinig Silberte Voisin amac conaie na páistí an Maigóean níos gaire oóib. Bí an cuma céanna uirtí, ac tar éis cúpla nóiméad o’féac sí ar na páistí, táinig gaire beag uirtí, agus o’imig sí as raóarc.

Conaie siad arís i roim imead oóib agus tuigead do Madame Ogeimbre go raib rud éigin as an ngnac sa gno go léir. Éuaig sí cun cainte leis an dtáir Lambert agus mol seisean oóib gan an scéal a leatad.

Ac, bíod is gur dein an máthair Theophile sa clochar a díeall ina coinne, leat an scéal. An céad oíce eile conaie na páistí an Maigóean arís agus ceistig Albert í:

“An tú an Maigóean gan Smál?” Crom sí a ceann agus o’oscail a láma amac óna céile.

“Cao ab áil leat oinn?”

“Bígi go maic i gcónaí,” an freagra a fuair sé.

“Deimio,” ar seisean, “beimio go maic, i gcónaí.”

Trí huair eile a taidisig máthair Dé do na leanaí an oíce sin. Cuiread na ceisteanna



Silberte Ogeimbre, a fear céile, agus a páiste

céanna uirte agus fuarctas na freagraí céanna.

An céad oíche eile coimeádóir na páistí sa baile agus ní fáca an slua a bhí lasmuig den clochar ruo ar bith. Fead an ama bhí na tuismiteoirí as ceistiú na bpáistí agus as taeannt orcu an fírinne a insint, agus nuair a seas siad go daingean len a ndúirt siad ligead dóib dul don clochar arís. An oíche sin nocht an maighean dóib go raib uaidi go dtógráí séipéal ar láthair na bpiseanna.

Ní féidir cuntas a tabairt anseo ar na piseanna uile, ná ar an mion-scrúdú a deinead ar gac a bain leo. Ar féite Muire san Smál táinig táimh-eal ar na páistí agus iad as breacnú ar an maighean agus níor táibsiú sí arís go ceann cúis lá. Trí huairé is tríocha a cónaic siad i san iomlán agus

cuir siad a lán ceisteanna uirte de réir mar a ordáio dóib. Ar dá ocáid nocht an maighean a croí dóib—croí órga agus gaele solais timpeall air.

Bí 30,000 duine i láthair nuair a taispeáin an maighean í féin don uair deireannaic ar Eanáir a trí, 1933, agus bhí 90 doctúirí ann. "Iompóid mé peacaig," a dúirt sí. Tug sí teachtairéad-ai príobáideaca dóib agus o'fás slán acu.

Ní féidir cur síos anseo ac oiread ar na míorúiltí iomadúla a tárla as Deauraing ó sin i leic. Gac bliain méadaio go mór ar uimhir na n-oiltreac-ai agus bíonn breis agus míle oíob as triall ar an áit in aghaid na bliana faoi láthair, i dtreo go bfuil Deauraing ar ceann de mhór-scrínte na maighe san Eoraip.

MÁIRÍN Ó CORRBUÍ.

## nasair

Tá baile beag ar taob chnoic  
i dtír i bpad i gcéin;  
Is mór a clú ar fuaid an  
domhain

Sí boct sean-nósac é.

Is ann a cónaig faoi riamh  
—le Muire, ós san smál,  
Is lósar, ceardaí cneasta  
caoin—

An té a cruthaig cáic.

Ansiú a múin Sé umlaioct  
dúinn,

Is conas mar is cóir  
Ar doil a cur le naom-toil  
Dé

Gac lá i ngleann na noeor.

Doibinn duit, a baile beag  
Mar siúil an Rí faoi;  
Naopa i gac cloic deo cuio,  
Deannaite gac fíó.

M. Ó CORRBUÍ.



## Star of Hope

*Softly a breeze in Bethlehem sighing  
As sweetly sounding on the cold  
night air  
Angels' voices come gently stealing  
To the Infant lying in the manger  
there.*

*Hark to the message in that  
wondrous singing,  
Shepherds heard and came to pray;  
Let us too with joyful hearts  
adoring,  
Go to Him this Christmas day.*

*Brightly the star o'er Bethlehem  
shining  
The darkness of night fast fades  
away  
For men of goodwill in whose  
hearts there is yearning  
There's the joy and peace of the  
first Christmas day.*

—MICHAEL REEN.

## Pre-Marriage Counselling Course For Engaged Couples

**Next Series Begins 29th Jan., 1961**

This Course, which is under the patronage of His Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. Murphy, will begin its next series of talks on *Sunday, 29th January, 1961*. The following is a list of the talks to be given: Courtship and Engagement; Marriage is a Great Sacrament; Characteristics of Men and Women; Adjustments in Marriage; Ideal in Husband and Wife; Duties of Husband and Wife; Marriage Laws of the Church; Housing Problems; Home Economy; Family and the Doctor; Parents and Children; The Family, the Parish and the School; Wedding Plans; Marriage Ceremony.

The Course will continue for nine

Sunday evenings, ending on Palm Sunday, 26th March. Time: 8—10 p.m.

All couples who intend to get married in the near future are urged to do this Course.

Three series of instructions have now been given in Limerick since we began in October, 1959, and have been very well attended. Two series are held every year—in Autumn and Lent—and it is to be hoped that many more young couples will avail of this great opportunity.

Application should be made to:

REV. D. GALLAGHER, C.C., St. John's, Limerick.



## TEENAGE FORUM

A Challini agus a Bhucailli,

IT has sometimes struck me that the Christian Doctrine class in which there is so much detail about all aspects of our Faith may cause you to miss the wood for the trees. There is so much about regulations and ceremonial, so much about dos and donts, that you may be inclined to forget that our religion can be summed up as love and loyalty for a person, Jesus Christ. The first followers of Christ in Palestine two thousand years ago became such because they were powerfully attracted to this wonderful Person. It is worth recalling also that even those who do not accept that Our Lord was Divine recognise that He was the most wonderful man that ever walked on earth. All recognise that in Him was to be found a combination of gentleness and strength such as no one else has ever attained.

We are all aware of the gentleness of Jesus. We recall His liking for children and His wish to have them near Him. We recall His all-embracing sympathy for the sick and the weak. But we may be inclined to forget that He was always supremely strong, always in complete command of every situation, that He always had a calm dignity which nothing could take from Him. We may forget that during the three years He moved through Palestine He had always to be on His guard against the enmity of the all-powerful Pharisees, that he had to have courage to carry on in spite of their opposition.

That word, courage, is the key to the character of Jesus. This was shown above all during the terrible two days of his trial and execution. Remember that Jesus was in every way a man and that He went through everything that a man goes through who is on trial for his life, is condemned to death and executed. If you read the account of the trial and death of Jesus, you cannot but be struck by the strength and calm with which He carried Himself during those terrible hours. That is how any of us also would hope to act if we found ourselves in a similar situation.

There is one incident in Our Lord's life which has always appealed to myself. I would like to recall it for you. It is His meeting with Mary Magdalen. He had gone into the house of one of the Pharisees. This beautiful woman who lived for luxury came in and kneeling before Him allowed her tears of repentance to fall on His bare feet and wiped them with her long hair. It is thought the reason she did this was because the Pharisees had not shown Our Lord the customary courtesy of offering Him a basin of water to wash His feet which were dusty from the road. What caused Mary to act as she did? It was because, having heard Him speaking to the people, she had been so impressed by His words and His wonderful personality that she wished to change her life and live as He urged people to live. Note also that Our Lord, seeing her sincerity, allowed her the familiarity of letting her tears fall on His feet and of using her hair to wipe them. Mary's whole way of life was changed from this contact with Jesus and she became His most

faithful follower. When all the others except John fled after he was arrested, fearing that a similar fate would befall themselves, Mary, reckless of the consequences, remained with Him and gave Him the consolation of her presence as He hung on the cross.

I have told you before about the Macra na Tuaithe clubs in County Limerick. It is expected that at least six new clubs will be started in the County this winter. The clubs are for young people of the countryside and country towns between the ages of twelve and eighteen. The main activity is the undertaking of what the members call projects. These can be non-profit-making, such as a girl decorating a room of her home, or a member can borrow ten pounds under a special bank scheme and use the money on some project, usually of a farming or horticultural nature, which leaves a profit after paying back the loan. The undertaking of these projects is an excellent way of self development. If one of the new clubs is not being started in your area, you might tell your priest or national or vocational teacher that you were interested in starting a Club.

Fe coimirce Muire sibh go leir,

An tAthair Pdraig.

\*

'Would you believe it,' said a wife after her visitor had left, 'if that woman yawned once, she yawned at least ten times while I was talking.'

'My dear,' said her husband, 'I don't think she was yawning. She just wanted to say something.'

IT is said that when you know you don't know, you are well on the way to knowing. If that be true, and Ann Dooley thinks it is, there are many country drama groups about to come to greater prominence. They have been on the outer fringes of the movement, finding out, season after season, that there is a lot more in the drama game than meets the eye. A group may start up, get a play, cast it, speak the lines with fair intelligence, move according to directions in the script, stage it and light it as best they can, and what is the result but an awkward, uncouth show.

In villages near Dromcollogher, groups are working under the guidance of Diarmuid O Maolain. Diarmuid is a long time at it now, producing plays in Irish and in English, year after year. He has entered his groups in festivals everywhere and heard the advice and criticism of many adjudicators. He has failed, has come again and failed again, but he kept coming up till he won. During the past few years he has won trophies at provincial and national festivals. He has won more than once at the Oireachtas in Dublin and he has carried a trophy from Athlone. He studied and practised and attended summer drama courses.

So the villages around about have called him for advice and help and before the year is out more may be heard of Feenagh and Broadford and other places in the dramatically unexplored territories near the Cork border.

### ASKEATON EXPERIMENT

There are many serious young players who live between the Deel and the Maigue. They had a drama course in Askeaton last year and a small festival of their own afterwards. They were shy about it. It was an infant thing and they did not want you to see their tumbles. Now they have planned to bring all the casts together in Askeaton to produce a play under an expert producer. The producers of the various groups will not take part in the

# DRAMA

By ANN DOOLEY

\*

plays but will stay with the visiting producer and he will explain the ideas behind his decisions. The cast will be taken from the assembled players of the five or six parishes round about. I understand this is a Muintir na Tire effort at regional co-ordination.

Since last my mind gloated over feasts of drama, Cyril Cusack came to the City Theatre and had great audiences for Walter Macken's *Voices of Doolin*. There was a week of opera and the city thronged to see *Il Trovatore* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. These were excellent efforts and the courage of the promoters is to be commended. They have kept their eyes on standards. They have attempted to move above the stage of musical comedy. The people have supported them and applauded them. They needed encouragement and they have received it.

*The King and I* appeared on the Crescent Stage from the Cecilian Musical Society, with Eoin O Mordha giving great stature and eloquence to the King and Kay Hanrahan as *I* playing upon our tender emotions with delicate ease. Some, who had seen the film, wondered how Eoin would look in Siamese regal costume. He looked regal indeed.

### SPAIN IN THE AMHARCLANN

The Amharclann na Feile with its new floor newly nailed and its new dressing rooms newly roofed, was re-opened on Sunday, the 13th November, by the College Players playing *The Romantic Young Lady*, by G. Martinez Sierra, for four days, followed by *The House of Bernada Alba*, written by Garcia Lorca. It is

many years since the College Players produced *The Romantic Young Lady*. The earlier production was better. It is hard to place the blame for this. Some of the parts, particularly that of Rosario by Alice Guerrini, were played with disarming beauty and sincerity, but the play as a whole failed to catch the correct speed and lightness.

The Lorca play was of great interest and was excellently produced and played. The play's strength became apparent in the first few minutes. The dialogue was strong, terse and meaningful. There was no endless conversation which might or might not be involved in the plot. Scenes followed each other architecturally, building towards inevitable catastrophe. The characters were from aristocratic Spain, hardened in its social and religious arteries. Attributes which might have been reflections of God's glory were seen as ends in themselves, arid, without God, without charity. In the absence of a compassionate Christ, stones for the sinner flew thick and fast. Ilsa Barea, writing on Lorca, states that he was assassinated by Fascists shortly after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. Chesterton wrote of good men who had grave reason to go wrong. It was a good play, well produced, well played, beautifully staged and well lit.

Had this play been produced at Feile time it would have been difficult to prevent a black market in tickets. Why was so wonderful a performance so poorly attended? I shall remember the strong peasant cunning of Biddy McGrath, the inflexible ramrod strength of Eileen Egan, the haloed age of Marie O'Driscoll, the self annihilating plainness of Peggy Russell and the fiery-eyed rebellion of Betty Lawless.

In parting, I may tell you that Michael MacLiammoir is to come to Amharclann na Feile for one night in the Christmas Season with his internationally praised performance of *The Importance of Being Oscar*.

# SPORT



By REV. W. J. CARROLL, P.P.

\*

ON the international plane, the Olympic Games were, of course, the highlight in 1960. Rome in August seemed a strange choice of venue, and indeed a number of athletes were seriously affected by the great heat. Yet a truly amazing standard was maintained throughout, world and Olympic records being broken with almost monotonous regularity: even the long jump record of the peerless Jesse Owens, which had stood for twenty-five years, went at last, though only by a very small margin. It seemed to be generally accepted that the outstanding personality was the Christian Brother educated Herb Elliott, even though he won only one gold medal; but the manner in which he spreadeagled a high-class field in the metric mile stamped him as one apart, breaking the previous record by no less than  $5\frac{1}{2}$  seconds. Yet, a case could be made for accepting Raefer Johnson, U.S.A. as the best of them all. In winning the Decathlon, a gruelling contest, he amassed a record total of points, and proved himself the world's greatest all-rounder. Just look at some of his performances:—10.9 seconds for the 100 metres; long jump, 24ft. 1in.; high jump, 6ft.  $\frac{1}{4}$ in.; pole vault, 13ft. 5ins.; putting the shot, 51ft. 10ins., etc. Yet, he only narrowly beat a Formosan named Yang Chuan Kwang: here are some of the honourable Kwang's feats:—100 metres in 10.7 seconds; 400 metres in 48 secs.; high jump, 6ft. 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ ins.; long jump, 24ft. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ins. The Irish team did poorly at the games, the best performance being Lawlor's fine hammer throw of 213ft; but the games proved an even bigger disappointment for the British athletes, several of whom were expected to capture gold or silver medals.

## LIMERICK'S SHOWING IN IRISH EVENTS

To come home to our own country and county, Limerick has not fared well this year. Our hurling and football teams have plumbed the depths. Yet there seems to be

a ray of hope: as we write our hurlers have won a league tie with Kerry by a very wide margin. Kerry hurling is, of course, far from top class, yet to beat them in Kerry on a holding pitch by 23 points was praiseworthy, but the really heartening aspect of the game was that our men showed real spirit and determination, qualities sadly lacking in previous outings. Another encouraging feature has been the continuance of the splendid performances put up for some time past in hurling and football by the C.B.S. boys in the city.

## N.A.C.A. AND HANDBALL SUCCESSES

In other fields, our county men have done tolerably well. Sean O'Sullivan of Tournafulla romped home in the senior cross-country championship, and also won the 8,000 metres title; his namesake, P. J. O'Sullivan of Regional club, won the 880 yards national title. Limerick won the Munster senior cross-country team championship, and were a good second to Galway in the All-Ireland test; the N.A.C.A. athletes also won a number of Munster titles. In handball, our boys annexed two Irish titles, Mick O'Brien and Sonny Walsh winning the Junior soft doubles and Mick O'Brien the Junior singles, and in the whole championship campaign

they did not lose a single game. Liam Ward, six times Irish champion jockey, made a gallant bid to retain his championship, but narrowly failed to catch his rival, who had the advantage of riding for the winning O'Brien stable; Liam, however rode a much bigger percentage of placed horses. Rathkeale Swimming Club did pioneer work in building a fine swimming pool, which drew high praise from prominent officials present at the opening. Rathkeale contributed over £3,000 towards the project, and also got a substantial grant through the good offices of the Co. Manager and the Co. Council.

## OTHER SUCCESSES

It may not be very much out of place here to recall a big Limerick achievement when the Irish Junior Chamber of Commerce awarded its first prize to Mr. Jerry McMahon of Ardagh as the farmer of the year. Jerry, a former radio officer, from his eleven acre farm produced a gross income of £130 per acre, compared with the national average output of £15 per acre: and greatly daring in overstepping the scope of a sports article, may we mention a notable Limerick success this year in the artistic world when in the All-Ireland Festival in Athlone the Limerick Studio group won first prize for three-act plays open to all Ireland, and we hope to be pardoned for including the winning by Rathkeale Parish Council of first prize in the Bord Failte competition for community roadside gardens open to the twenty-six counties.

\*

*Teacher to pupil—'Can you explain to me how matches are made?'*

*Pupil—'No, miss, I'm sorry I don't know. I'd love to be able to help you.'*

*Teacher (a little surprised)—'Why, what do you mean?'*

*Pupil—'Well, I've heard mother say you have been trying hard to make a match these last half-dozen years.'*



WE met recently a rather earnest young lady with spectacles who accused us of being a "misogynist" saying that we didn't seem to meet any ladies as we walked down O'Connell Street. Having looked up the word in the dictionary we now wish to clear ourself of the charge. We have great pleasure in recording our meetings with two ladies who, since they are engaged in the doing of good, wish to remain anonymous. These ladies have played big parts in founding two organisations to assist the very many of their fellow citizens of Limerick who need help. One of these, St. Anne's Guild, works in the Ballinacurra Weston area and has organised such things as hot meals delivered to families where there is great need and the provision of a laundry with washing machines where harassed housewives can do their washing for a nominal charge. The Guild is now engaged in having a derelict site turned into a fully equipped children's playground.

The other organisation, called Unitas, is in St. Munchin's Parish. As the name implies, the members seek to create a unity in Christian charity in the parish between those who need help and those who are better off. The members establish

a relationship of friendship and companionship with the women of families where there are special difficulties and do anything they can to help them solve their problems. They have established a club-room where the women of the district can meet and are given facilities for doing their family sewing and clothes-making and where they can also learn home money-making techniques.

There is great need for a realisation that, because of such causes as unemployment, a very big proportion of the citizens of Limerick city need help. There is need for an all-embracing community spirit. The emergence of St. Anne's Guild and of Unitas are two of the healthiest developments in Limerick in recent times. To any ladies who read O'Gunnell he would suggest that they might consider getting in touch with these organisations. Or there might be some other similar work that you have been thinking about. What about discussing it with your friends?

Recently we met in the Street an old friend (or more correctly a young friend) Michael Noonan, the County Secretary of Macra na Feirme. We were delighted to hear

from him that it is almost certain that the Farm Apprenticeship Scheme, sponsored jointly by the N.F.A. and Macra na Feirme, will be launched shortly with Government financial support. Under the Scheme young men who want to be efficient modern farmers will be able to follow that career even though they are not inheriting farms. But they will have to be men of character as the apprenticeship means nearly four years working at the regulation wage on selected farms as well as periods at an agricultural school. Furthermore, they will have to save £200 from their wages in that period. If they succeed in getting their certificate at the end of the apprenticeship they will be assisted by the Government to buy a farm. This assistance will vary according to the means of their parents and the maximum will be £2,000.

This is an excellent scheme, but, in the opinion of O'Gunnell, it needs to be complemented by a Land Bank such as has been proposed by Dr. Philbin, the Bishop of Clonfert, and which was, in substance, suggested also by the Committee set up by the Government to advise on State Capital investment. The proposed Land Bank would use State capital to buy land, especially larger farms, as it came on the mar-

ket and make it available on hire or hire/purchase to young men with the Apprenticeship Certificate. Thus it would be the means by which land could be channelled from those who have not a real interest in farming to young men who would be fully productive users of the land.

This is the most dynamic proposal that has yet been made for rural Ireland. If the Land Bank were operating on a significant scale it would go far towards solving all our rural problems. First of all, it would end the scandal of aliens to our way of life buying large farms, the possession of which carries considerable influence. Again the Land Bank would encourage widows, bachelors and others not interested in farming to sell their land and replace them by men who would have to work the land at top efficiency in order to pay the purchase money. We would then quickly see an improvement in the figure of £18 per acre of average annual production. Finally, since the young men who got the land would be married in no time, the Land Bank would be a major contribution towards solving the evils of depopulation and an unnatural marriage pattern about which we all moan but do nothing.

If any man in public life should have read this far we would suggest to him that he can do a great service to the country by mobilising public opinion for the Land Bank idea.

Recently we met two men who were looking rather pleased with themselves as they strolled down O'Connell Street — Councillor Joseph Liddy and Commandant John Phelan. When O'Gunnell commented that they looked in good cheer despite the icy November blast that was coming at us from Cecil Street, they produced copies of a tasteful brochure which they had just collected at the "Leader" office. The brochure is the work of the Limerick Industrial Development Committee of which Joseph



MICHAEL J. NOONAN.  
Secretary Co. Limerick Macra  
na Feirme.

Liddy is chairman and John Phelan a member. We stepped into Woolworth's doorway so that O'Gunnell could examine the booklet. It begins with an introduction in seven languages which indicates the contents and then very effectively sets out the facilities which Limerick has to offer the foreign industrialist and outlines the Government incentives to setting up factories in Ireland. The brochure, they told us, is now being sent to fifteen hundred industrial concerns in Europe and America. Considerable work has gone into its preparation and we hereby tender our congratulations to the thirty six man committee on which all organisations in the city are represented. Joseph Liddy and John Phelan expressed their appreciation of the co-operation which they got from the city firms. Our congratulations again on their civic spirit to all concerned. Next time we hope to be able to report on reactions from abroad.

It is a pity, however, that we have not more expansion of existing Irish firms or starting of new ones. But, of course, that to a great extent is due to our defective and antiquated banking and credit system. But we better hold that for another day or the Editor will throw us out altogether.

Nodhlag fe shean dibh go leir,

—O'GUNNELL.

## CHURCH HISTORY—contd.

ber of Christians anyhow, and then only by means of what was called a gnosis. This was a deep knowledge of Holy Scripture especially which would enable the enlightened to investigate religious truth and thence develop new ideas. It involved a rejection of the current simple exposition of the Faith and engendered an intellectual snobbery that had no time for a plain and unadorned presentation of the Christian point of view.

The prospect of developing new ideas proved most alluring to the intellectual elements who shaped it into a system. This turned out to be a mixture of pagan notions for the most part, with some Christianity, a little Judaism and, in later varieties, of all things, a dash of Buddhism for good measure.

This system which underwent considerable variation from time to time could scarcely be said to represent a direct threat to the Church. It did, however, blunt its appeal to the intellectual classes before the Church had time to take up a position on the problems raised by Greek learning. Until this was remedied by the Christian Apologists. She had to content Herself with no more than a moderate influence with the enlightened elements of pagan society.

\*

*A harassed mother says: "At Christmastime the kids hang up their stockings. After that it's a full year before any of them hangs up anything again."* — READER'S DIGEST.

# New Diocesan College



## Report on Building Fund

December 1st, 1960

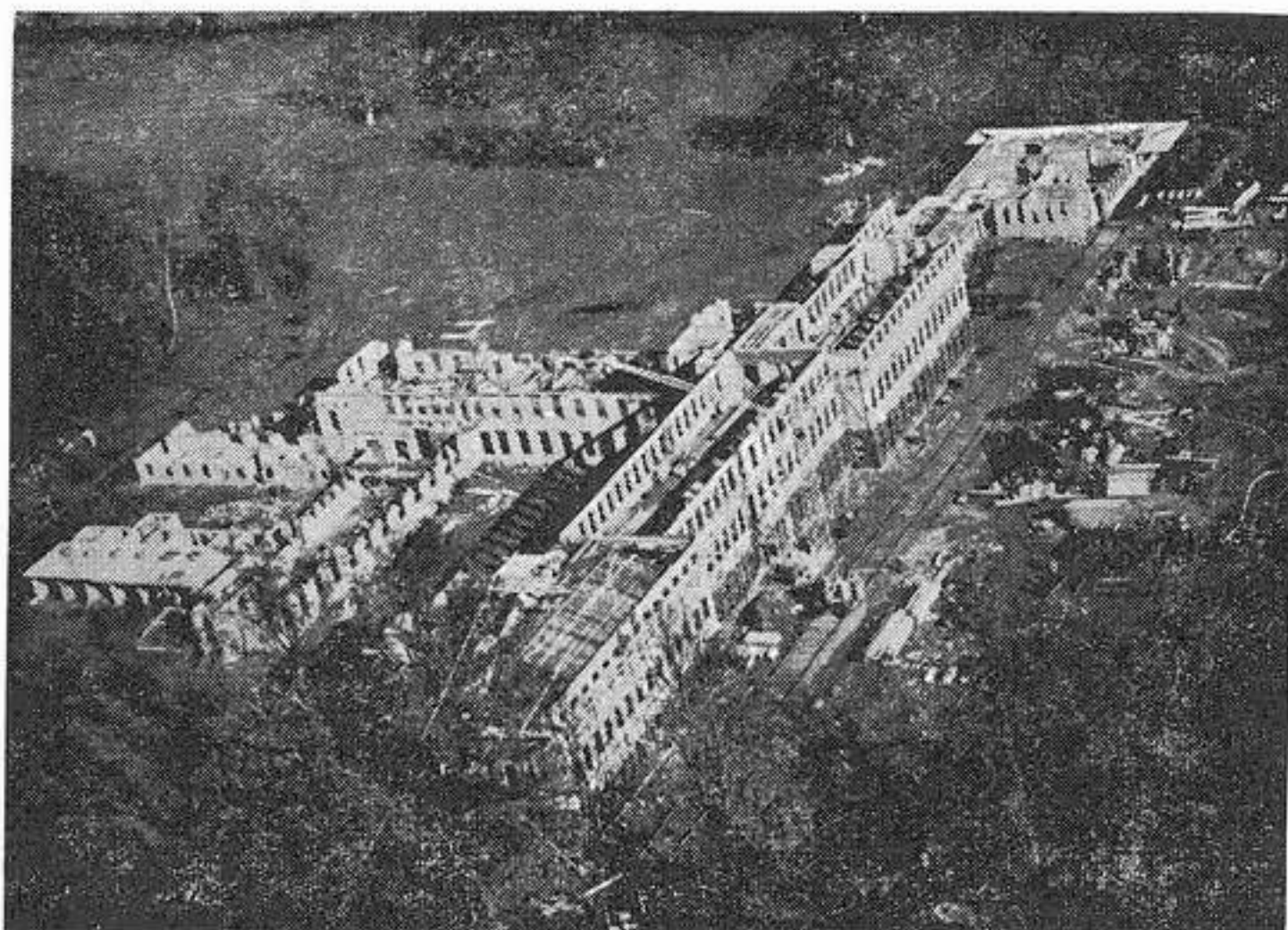
We have spent on Site Development and on New College Building, £87,872, and we have on hands, £50,000, which includes £14,000 from Free Loan.

We gratefully acknowledge the following:—

### PRIVATE SUBSCRIPTIONS

September-November, 1960

	£	s	d.
"Anon."—High Altar, New College Chapel . . . . .	1,000	0	0
Knights of Columbanus . . . . .	100	0	0
Rt. Rev. Mgr. G. O'Keeffe, J.C.O., Arcadia, C'Iorna.	88	10	5
"Anon," per Canon Lee . . . . .	80	0	0
Mr. L. de Courcy, M.I.A.A.	50	0	0
Rev. P. Casey, Los Angeles	34	15	10
Per Most Rev. Dr. Murphy	21	0	0
Mr. & Mrs. A. O'Donovan, City . . . . .	11	0	0
Messrs. United Drug & Chemical Co., Ltd., City	10	0	0
Per Most Rev. Dr. Murphy	10	0	0
Messrs. Irish Fruit Juices Ltd., Brosna . . . . .	8	0	0
Liam Uas Mac Mathuna, Priomh-Oide, Sc. Breann-dain, Luimneach . . . . .	5	0	0
Judge Barra O Briain . . . . .	5	0	0
"A Cashel Priest" . . . . .	5	0	0
"Anon," Shanagolden . . . . .	5	0	0
"A Nurse," England . . . . .	5	0	0
Rev. Roger Hayes, Liverpool	4	0	0
"A Legionary" . . . . .	1	0	0
Mr. J. McMahon, Castle-mungret . . . . .	1	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. White, Glen-agore, Athea . . . . .	1	0	0
Mrs L. Hennessy, Drom-collogher . . . . .	1	0	0
	1,446	6	3



Aerial view of construction work on New College.

## How the Building is Progressing

As can be seen from this photograph the building of the New College is well advanced. The following is a report on the different sections as from the 1st December, 1960 :

### Classroom and Dormitory Block:

This Block, which is the largest section, contains 13 Classrooms, Chemistry Laboratory, Physics Laboratory, Study Hall, Music Rooms, and sleeping accommodation for 142 boys in dormitories which are divided into cubicles.

The Roof boarding and felting has been completed and much of the copper roofing has been done on the East and West ends. This roof should be completed in 7 weeks, weather permitting.

### Refectory and Kitchen Block :

This Block contains Boys' Refectory, Library, Infirmary, Single rooms for 30 senior boys, Priests' Dining Room, Kitchen Unit, Servery, Boiler House, Convent, and Staff accommodation.

The Refectory Block is ready for roofing and the Convent and Staff

Block has been built to first floor level. The next stage is the casting of the roof to the Kitchen Unit.

### Recreation and Ablution Block :

This Block contains two large Recreation Rooms, Assembly Hall, and underneath these, Showers, Locker Rooms, etc.

This Block has been built to roof level in some sections and to first floor level in the remainder.

### Mechanical and Electrical Installations.

Work on these important sub-contracts is proceeding remarkably well and is keeping step with the building.

Generally speaking, the building work is well up to schedule and should be ready for the commencement of the School Year, 1962.

In our next issue we hope to feature the New College Chapel.

# OUR PAGE



CHRISTMAS, 1960.

*My dear Children,*

Once again it is Christmas and I hope you will have a very happy time and lots of fun. I expect you are already saving your pennies to buy gifts. Have you remembered to prepare a gift for the Holy Child whose birth has given to Christmas its real meaning? Your love is the most acceptable gift you can offer to Him. You can prove it by being more obedient, truthful, helpful and gentle, and by being faithful to your little Advent Practices and Prayers.

Are you pleased to see another competition in Our Page? It seems very easy but your answer must be exactly the same as the one that is locked away in the adjudicator's desk if you are to be in the draw.

You will be glad to hear that your Painting Competition was excellent. I had a hard time trying to find the best ones and the list of Highly Commended was so long that it would not fit in "Our Catholic Life." I wish I could give a prize to each one. For very nice letters I would like to thank Pat Creed, Mary Egan, Mary Martin, Pamela Vaughan, Thomas Hickey and Aine Ni Griofa. I hope you will get on well in the play, Pat. Thank you for the invitation. If you write another nice letter to me I will ask the Editor to put it into Our Page for Easter. Thomas, I hope you are better now and able to walk again. Maith an cailín, Áine, bhí do litir go hiontach. Míle buíochas ar son na paidreacha agus na pingine.

Your Christmas Picture shows you the Twins fixing up the Crib. You will love painting it, I'm sure. I hope you have all got a nice Crib at home. It is quite easy to make up one with brown or black paper, a cardboard box and some hay. The figures can be bought for a few shillings and you can make the trees from cardboard, a piece of stick and a little piece of wood to make them stand. The teacher of the nionáins in school will show you how to cut the card.

I shall pray for all of you, dear children, at Christmas, that the Divine Child will send you many blessings for yourselves and your families. You will ask Him for something special for

Your loving

AUNTIE BRIGID.

## dá mbéad deirfiúirín óg agam

Dá mbéad deirfiúirín óg agam  
bosfaim an clabán dí,  
canfaim suantraí dí  
go dtitfead coilead sám uiré  
Dá mbéad deirfiúirín óg agam—  
Ac níl!

Dá mbéad deirfiúirín óg agam  
tiúrfaim liom ag siúl í,  
cífimis an nóinín,  
daileoimis salcuada,  
Dá mbéad deirfiúirín óg agam—  
Ac níl!

Dá mbéad deirfiúirín óg agam  
tiúrfaim mo babóg dí,  
tiúrfaim mo mirlíní dí,  
agus tiúrfaim mo liathróid dí,  
Dá mbéad deirfiúirín óg agam—  
Ac níl, níl, níl!

\*

### RESULTS OF AUTUMN PAINTING COMPETITION

#### JUNIORS:

1. Eveleen Kelly, Governor's House, Limerick.
2. Joan Binley, St. Vincent de Paul's, Limerick.
3. Stella Quinn, Bosnetstown, Kilfinane, Co. Limerick.
4. Aileen Dillon, Clongownagh, Adare, Co. Limerick.

#### SENIORS:

1. Mary Noonan, St. Joseph's School, Limerick.
2. Bryan Scanlon, 14 Mayorstone Park, Limerick.
3. James Reidy, Brickhill, Cratloe, Co. Clare.
4. Anne Raleigh, 10 Caledonian Place, Limerick.

#### LUCKY DIP PRIZE:

Thomas Hickey, Curragh Bridge, Adare.

#### BEST SCHOOLS:

1. St. Munchin's (Girls)
2. St. Joseph's.
3. St. Vincent de Paul's.
4. Kilfinane.
5. Kildimo.

# THE MURPHY TWINS

"MAMMY," said Mary, coming in from school on Friday evening, "you'll have to help me with my composition, it's on Christmas Customs again. Wouldn't you think they'd think of something new in the Secondary School instead of giving us the same old composition as we got last year?" "Can't you just copy out last year's one," volunteered Peter, "Sister Aquinas would never know." "I suppose she wouldn't," replied Mary, "but I wouldn't do that, anyway, because I must write a better one this year than last year, and besides she's giving a prize for it." "What are

customs anyway?" asked Pauline. "Oh, you know the things people do at Christmas, like lighting a candle, and visiting the Crib and hanging up stockings, but I could write all that in a paragraph, so you'll have to help me, Mammy." "I'm afraid you'll have to ask Daddy this time," was Mammy's comment, "because I'm very busy this evening, I've to ice a cake and Michael is coming home to-morrow and I must get his room ready."

So, when Mr. Murphy had his tea taken, he found that he had an eager audience all wanting to know about Christmas customs. "Well,"

began Mr. Murphy, "last year I told you all about how hunting the wren began, so this year I'll begin before Christmas. In some countries the feast of St. Nicholas, December 6th, is the day when Santa Claus brings his gifts. In Holland he enters the port of Amsterdam in a boat, having come all the way from Spain, and a crowd of little black boys come with him from Morocco. The Mayor welcomes him and he rides through the street on a white horse clad in red with a mitre on his head and a crosier in his hand. That night the children put their shoes on the hearth with hay, carrots and water for the white horse beside them, and during the night Black Peter, one of the little black boys, slides down the chimney and takes the food for the horse and leaves a present in the shoes." Pauline looked up puzzled. "Daddy," she said, "why does Santa Claus wait until Christmas Eve to come here?" Daddy paused for a moment and then said, "I suppose it takes him some time to get from one country to another, because he hasn't yet got an aeroplane. Actually the children in Spain don't get their presents until the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6th, and it's the three Wise Kings who bring them. In Sweden they celebrate the feast of St. Lucy, December 13th, in a special way. It is called the "Feast of Light." Early in the morning, while yet dark, one of the young girls in the house puts on her head a crown to which several lighted candles are attached and then goes to announce to her parents that light is coming back again to the world. This means that soon the days will be getting longer, but it also means that Christmas is coming, when Our Blessed Lord, Who called Himself the Light of the World, came on Earth, and flooded the skies of Bethlehem with light. In Mexico the celebrations start on

## New Christmas Competition

- Fill in the missing words in the sentences on the coupon. You must pick the words from the following list: —
- |        |           |            |        |
|--------|-----------|------------|--------|
| Sheila | Sunday    | Bicycle    | Five   |
| Joan   | Monday    | Doll       | Six    |
| Nuala  | Wednesday | Story Book | Eight  |
| Betty  | Thursday  | Camera     | Ten    |
| Anne   | Saturday  | Frock      | Twelve |
- Write your name, address and age.
  - Cut round dotted line and post to: —
  - Auntie Brigid, *Our Catholic Life*, St. John's, Limerick.
  - If you are sending a Picture also, cut out the whole page.
  - The names of all those who send in the correct solution will be put into a bag. The winners' names will then be drawn out.

.....had her birthday on.....

Daddy gave her a..... Her cake had

.....candles.

Name .....

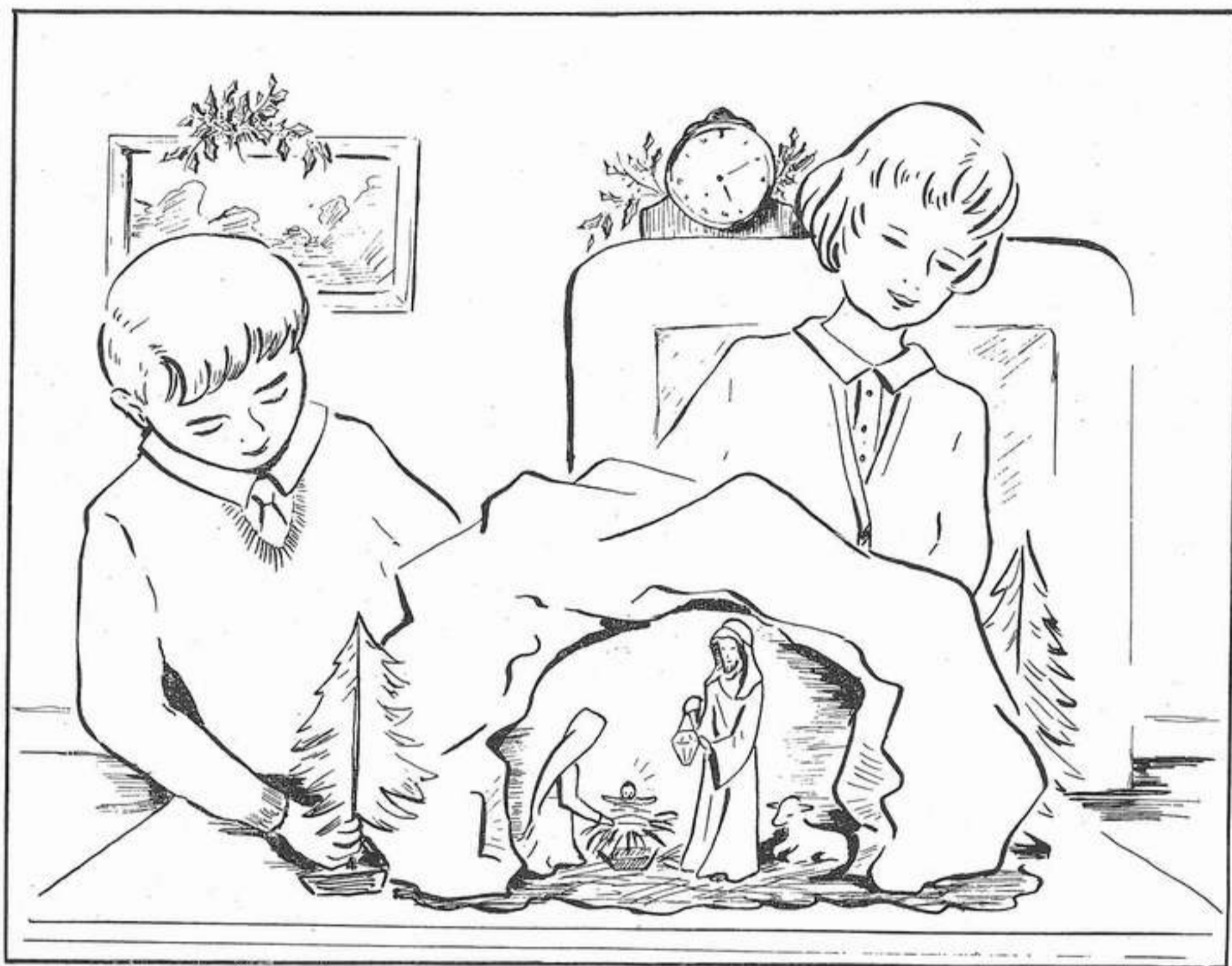
Address .....

Age .....

PRIZES—1st, 10/-. 2nd, 5/-. 3rd, 5/-.

Continued overleaf

# Your Christmas Painting Competition



(1) **SINNSIR** (ós cionn 10 mbliain)

**DUAISEANNA:**— 1: 10/-; 2: 7/6; 3: 5/-; 4: 5/-

(2) **SÓISIR** (fé bun 10 mbliain)

**DUAISEANNA:**— 1: 10/-; 2: 7/6; 3: 5/-; 4: 5/-

**RIALAÇA:** (1) **DACAIĞ AN PICTIÚIR.** (2) **LÍON ISTEAĞ AN CUPÓN.**

(3) **NÁ ZEARR AN CUPÓN DE'N LEACANAC.**

Send to Painting Competition, *Our Catholic Life*, St. John's Presbytery, Limerick.

Name .....

Address .....

Age .....

Signed .....

(Parent, Teacher)

DÍOÚ IARRACHTAÍ ISTIĞ ROIMH 15<sup>AO</sup> FEABRA, 1961.

## The Murphy Twins—Contd.

December 16th. Nine families get together and with lighted candles in their hands carry in procession from house to house statues of Our Lady and Saint Joseph. They are refused at the first eight houses but are welcomed and given a feast in the ninth house. This goes on for nine nights and they finish up each night at a different house. This is to remind the people of how Our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph were refused shelter in Bethlehem." Mr. Murphy paused and looked at his watch, "and now," he said, "I'm afraid it's bedtime. That will have to do for to-night, Mary." "O thank you, Daddy," said Mary, "I will easily be able to fill three pages now."

# BEN HUR

"POSITIVELY the most superb moving picture ever made in America in 16 magnificent scenes, with illustrated titles." Thus did ad-men describe the 1907 one-reeler, pirated from General Lew Wallace's historical novel, *Ben Hur*, which in its time became a very best seller. Few will remember the oldest Ben, but many recall the two-hour, four million dollar version made by M.G.M. in 1925, with Ramon Navarro in the title-role. Now, thirty-five years later, and eleven million dollars dearer, M.G.M. present the second *Ben Hur*, the most expensive movie ever made, the most prized, and at 214 mins. running time, one of the longest.

The film's fable stripped of frills is not too trite to be unconvincing, if it is a little too neatly contrived; Prince Judah Ben-Hur, a rich Jew considered to be an enemy of Rome, is a close friend of Messala, the Roman garrison commander in Jerusalem at the time of Christ. Esther, the daughter of one of his servants, to whom he has given freedom, loves him, and he her. When the new Governor rides into Jerusalem, Ben-Hur's household watch from the roof and a tile accidentally dislodged falls, the Governor is thrown, and the Legionaries under Messala raid the house. These childhood friends fall out because Ben-Hur refuses information against his people which Messala needs to further his fortunes. Thwarted in ambitions, he condemns Ben-Hur to slavery in the galleys, and shuts his mother and sister in the dungeons. On the desert march to the sea, Ben-Hur is offered a gourd of water by a mysterious stranger. The galley in which he is rowing is rammed by pirates, the Judean escapes and is taken to Rome and adopted by Arrius, the Roman Admiral, whose suicide he stopped. Arrius allows Ben-Hur to return to Jerusalem, where he is falsely told that his

mother and sister are dead. He seeks revenge on Messala, and wreaking it in a chariot-race, rough rides his enemy to death. But vengeance boomerangs when Messala, before dying, tells him that his mother and sister are alive, but are lepers. He searches for them, and Esther persuades the three to go to Jerusalem where Jesus is working miracles. Hate and grief tear Ben-Hur till he is caught in the crowd streaming to Calvary and is eddied to the feet of Christ, the stranger who offered him water in the desert. At the Crucifixion, the leprosy is cleansed, and Ben-Hur is converted. The film ends, "And with His words He took the sword out of my hands," pointing its moral.

What turns this film from an empty spectacle of insubstantial pageantry into a picture of considerable stature is, perhaps, the excellent direction of William Wyler working a script that never insults intelligence. Titles credit Karl-Tunberg with the screen play. It was touched up by play-wrights Behrmans and Gore Vidal. Christopher Fry, present at the shooting, contributed important additions. The dialogue sometimes has great power and depth of feeling, but the four-fold authorship or the spread of the story leaves it somewhat uneven.

If we could weigh and measure the flair that enables Director Wyler to get his unmistakable touches, we would turn his art into a science. He is more than a careful craftsman and a demanding task-master who shoots a scene maybe 20 times to perfect it. Here he tells of ambition and political intrigue souring human friendship and a faith found not in the conviction coming from argument but in the glow of giving human charity. The background is real and highly dramatic. And there is a finely wrought balance between the pomp and circumstance of the

wide canvas that was Rome's splendour on the one hand and the development of interesting, convincing and credible characters on the other. Wyler has given us a film that for sheer emotional assault will not be surpassed for a long time.

It builds a number of climaxes, the galleys' terror in the battle, the finding of the lepers in their banishment, the Via Dolorosa and the Crucifixion. But everyone will remember the Race. The Circus, a year a-building, covered 18 acres of Rome's Cinecitta to hold 10,000 spectators. The race was filmed over a three-month period and perfectly timed editing cut it to 9 mins. screen-time. It is a marvel of speed and fury, with seeming impossible camera angles, catching the blur of violent movement, the tremble of tautness and the shiver of fear. We have seen it all before, of course, but here it is so brutally and realistically done that only a down-right cynic could remain unmoved.

The photography by Robert Surtees is excellent. Camera 65 gives depth and cuts much of the usual fuzziness with sharp clarity. And the wide screen, more suited to crowd scenes, is well used in the intimate scenes to avoid losing the actors. The musical score has a few recurring themes, and one in particular unintrusively tightened a love scene that tended to drool. And how the stereophonic system helped.

*Ben-Hur* is a film of the time of Christ; it is not religious nor specifically spiritual. A truly religious film creates and depicts a valid spiritual experience and does not need elaborate sets nor a brilliantly costumed cast. Films like Bresson's *Journal d'un Cure de Campagne* or *Un condamné à mort s'est Echappé* analyse suffering of mind and the crucifixion of loneliness, but they do

Continued overleaf

not make mass entertainment. *Le Defroque* was a brilliant analysis of the mystery of the priest's vocation and showed God's need for men. *The Nun's Story* was a sincere and successful attempt to portray the spiritual searchings of a nun and yet it lost something of its power by the perfection of its polish. *Ben-Hur* uses popular religious drama to play on our emotions. It is not concerned with the theological implications of Christ's divinity and the psychology of the act of Faith. It tells a story and Our Lord happens to be in it. His powerful presence is suggested, and if His teaching is given only as the Eight Beatitudes, it is worth hearing in the cinema.

Without quibbling, I fault the phoniness of the sea on which such a blood and guts fight was staged; I fault the symbolic stream of blood and water flowing from the cross; I fault the miscasting of Jack Hawkins and the pain on his face. But from a myriad of memories, I liked the calf kicking his heels in the Bethlehem cave, the blind dropping the leper's alms from his begging bowl, the hilarious hamming of horse-loving sheik Griffith, the camera angle for the nailing on the cross, the gore on the battered Messala (Stephen Boyd) and the naturalism of his horrible dying. *Ben-Hur* is a film for all to see. But beware—you will be jolted and shocked by the unfakery of the fights and the authenticity of the awful violence. Can anything beat the cinema for entertainment? After *Ben-Hur*—emphatically No.

\*

## ?? Quiz ??

1. What is a pontoon bridge?
2. Which is the largest lake in Ireland?
3. What is a Stoic?
4. What is the difference between a "lunar" and a "calendar" month?
5. Where is St. Patrick's Purgatory?
6. What is a philatelist?

(Answers on opposite page)

# ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL, LIMERICK

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## Limerick Diocesan Welfare Bureau

To those who intend emigrating, and to their parents, the opening of an Emigration Welfare Bureau in the diocese is, I am sure, very welcome news. The Bureau has been established at the request and under the patronage of His Lordship, Most Reverend Dr. Murphy, Bishop of Limerick. The office is at 2 Quinlan Street, The Crescent, Limerick, and is open to the public on Mondays and Thursdays from 7.30 p.m. to 9 p.m. and on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 2.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

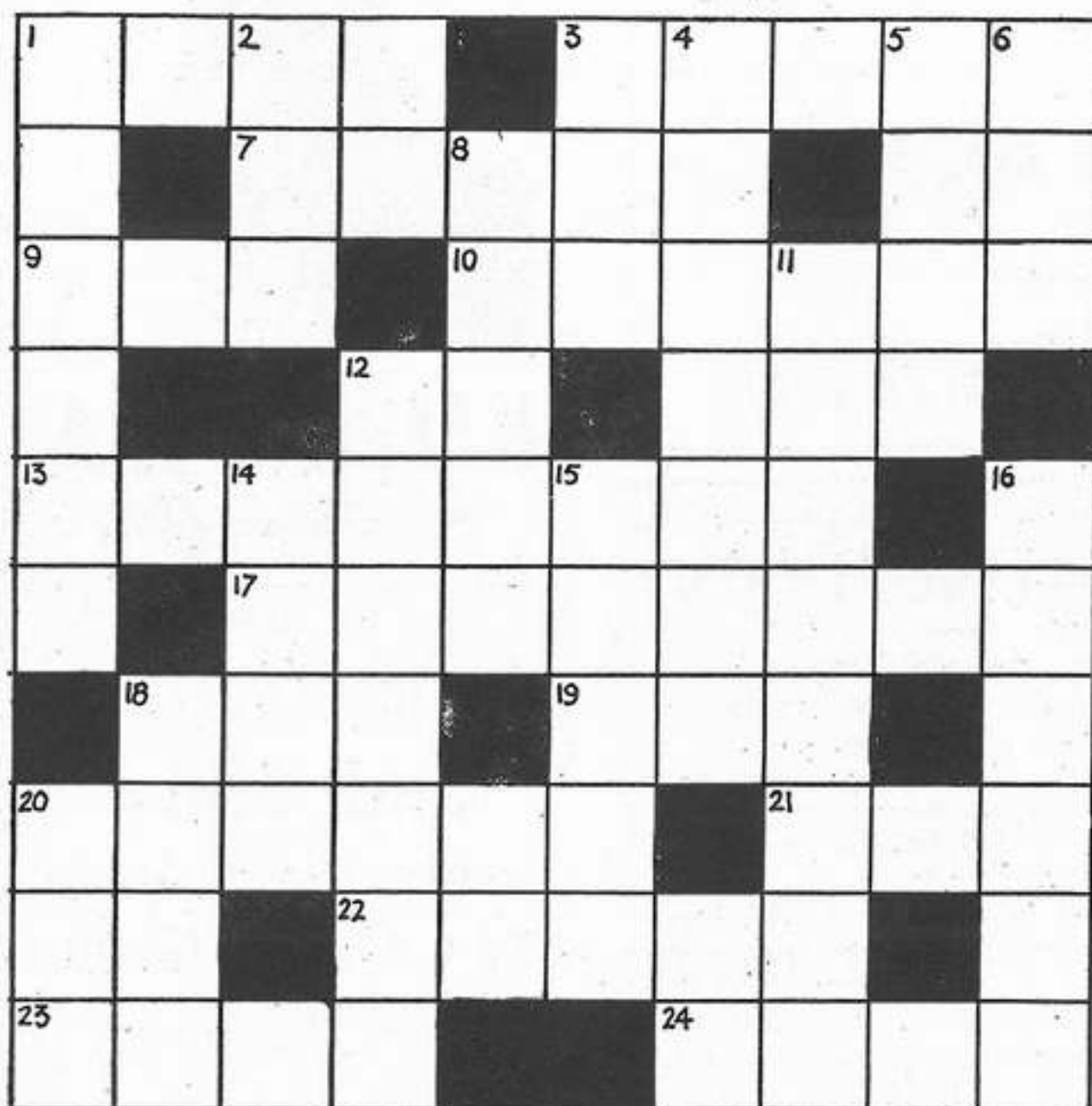
The service of the Bureau is at the disposal of all, both clergy and laity, particularly intending emigrants, in all matters relating to

emigrant welfare. It can be of assistance to intending emigrants in many ways; for instance, arrangements can be made, when necessary, to have young girls met at the Boat Trains in England and directed to their destinations; enquiries can be made concerning the suitability of contemplated employment or the availability of facilities for the practice of religious duties; emigrants can be put in contact with Catholics at their destination.

All enquiries should be addressed to The Secretary, Limerick Emigration Welfare Bureau, 2 Quinlan Street, The Crescent, Limerick. The services of the Bureau are entirely free.

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## ACROSS

1. 1 & 3. Top the Bill.
7. Different meaning to housewife and to gardener.
9. A bird.
10. Beggars and lawyers make it.
12. Impersonal appellation.
13. Members of a well-known Society.
17. Less beet for the finest of fish (4, 4).
18. Cute animal.
19. A navy employing sounds.
20. Everyone gives a hand (3, 3).
21. A help in more places than one.
22. Erect an island?
23. Hit smartly.
24. It is reversed in a way.

## DOWN

1. Vast uncultivated plain.
2. Part of an Irish war-cry.
3. Something different to a child and a climber.
4. Needed in most games.
5. Belonging to the bovine genus.
6. Someone we see little of these days.
8. Surname of a famous plotter.
11. Extracted virtues.
12. Wrong clue.
14. An old coin not worth counting.
15. A musical or artistic composition.
16. Compliance.
18. Gust or defect.
20. Aids to business even without me.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

Prizes will be awarded to the first three correct solutions opened.  
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Entries to be sent to Crossword,  
St. John's, Limerick, before 31st  
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## Answers

1. A temporary bridge supported by several flat-bottomed boats or metal cylinders.
2. Lough Neagh.
3. One who is indifferent to pleasure and pain.
4. A "lunar" month has 28 days whilst a "calendar" month may have 28, 29, 30 or 31 days.
5. Lough Derg, Co. Donegal.
6. A collector of postage stamps.



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