

ALEMBIC

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE



VOLUME XXI

NUMBER 4

MAY 1939

TICK—TICK—TICK

G. FRANCIS CROWLEY

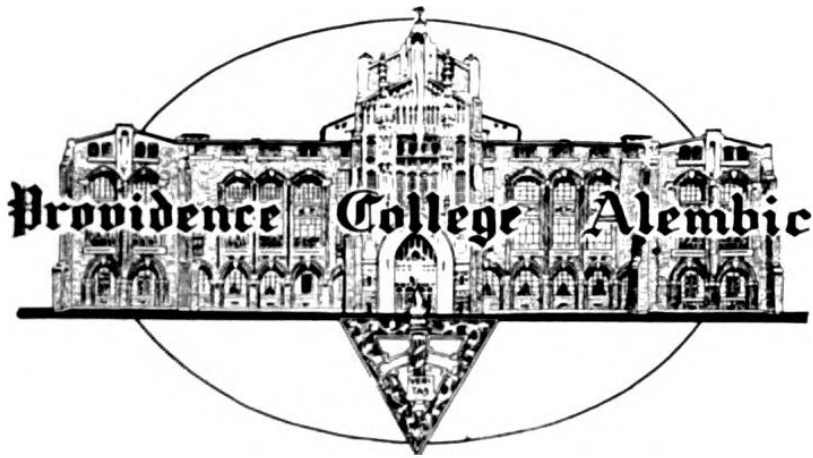
ALAS, POOR COBB

ROBERT C. HEALEY

THE COMMON TOUCH

LIONEL J. LANDRY

THE ALEMBIC



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY
BY THE
STUDENTS OF PROVIDENCE COLLEGE
PROVIDENCE, R. I.

“En Avant!”

PARTING from what we love is always a difficult task. This year's graduating class far from being the exception is reluctant to leave the College which it has grown to love with an undying fervor. The spirit of Providence College is deeply imbedded in the heart of each graduate and will continue to live on as an unquenchable fire of devotion and loyalty.

We of the graduating class are unwilling to say that we are leaving Providence College, but rather we state that we are merely departing from Providence College proper to take up further duties in propagating her name and spirit. We have been schooled in her philosophy and now we are prepared to spread it. We are becoming her missionaries.

Some of us will take different paths in this work, but we are all tending toward the same goal. Some will be in business, others the arts, and others the sciences. But we are similar in our dissimilarities. We have many objects to strive for, but we feel sure of acquiring them since we have been taught the “loveliness of living well”. Our lives are bound to be enriched and enhanced by our ability to appreciate the beauty in a moment of life.

Our time has come and we are ready.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOLUME XXI

MAY, 1939

NUMBER 4

"EN AVANT" Editorial	3
TICK—TICK—TICK A Short Story, by <i>C. Francis Crowley</i> , '39	5
TO HER A Poem, by <i>Thomas Farrell</i> , '42	8
ALAS, POOR COBB A Short Story, by <i>Robert C. Healey</i> , '39	9
THE GLORY OF AN EMPIRE A Narrative, by <i>Matthew P. Gallagher</i> , '41	18
THE COMMON TOUCH A Short Story, by <i>Lionel J. Landry</i> , '40	21
SOLITARY SOLITUDE A Short Story, by <i>John T. Hayes</i> , '40	29
ONE NEVER KNOWS A Narrative, by <i>Ira T. Williams, Jr.</i> , '41	36
LOVED, I NOT HONOR MORE A Short Story, by <i>Charles T. McGovern</i> , '41	39
WELL DONE, MY SON A Short Story, by <i>Herbert Kenny</i> , '39	43
PAPIST PROPAGANDA An Article, by <i>William H. Honnen, Jr.</i> , '41	53

Tick—Tick—Tick

By C. FRANCIS CROWLEY, '39

HE knew, even as he paced the floor, that his mind was not as strong as it should be.

He knew this, but still he walked back and forth across the floor, making sure as he did that his footsteps kept time to the rhythmic tick of the clock in the corner.

How many weeks, or years, he had been doing this he did not know—but, then, neither could he remember how long he had been living alone.

It was strange he thought, how a small thing which had started as a game gradually became necessary to one's peace of mind.

Of one thing he was sure—that the game (or so it had been) was slowly getting out of hand, and each night found him pacing for longer and longer intervals.

He knew too, that tonight he had walked the floor for longer than ever before. He was sure now that his mind was weaker than he had thought, and that the ticking of the clock controlled his actions, and knowing this he hurried to his bed and lay down.

Slowly he turned his body so that he lay on his right side, remembering that a friend had warned him of the danger of lying on his left.

This done he closed his eyes and waited expectantly for sleep to overtake him.

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Tick—Tick—Tick

Waiting he listened attentively — then he scurried across the floor in faster time than the ticking, and finally, unable to bear it any longer, he ran for the door and down the stairs. Gradually the band about his head loosened and he walked in the sunshine and breathed the morning air.

His mind was clearer here, and in its clearness he knew that he would never rest until the clock had stopped, but to stop it himself would be an admission of senility and this he could not bear.

One more night he decided and it would run itself down, and then he would be free.

His head bent forward, he walked around the yard, dreading the thought of returning to his room.

All day long he did not eat, and as the sun sank beyond the horizon, the cool air of the evening chilled his body. Shivering, he opened the door, ascended the stairs and entered his room.

The door had no sooner closed behind him than his ears caught the anticipated tick—tick—tick—tick—

Holding his shaking hands to his ears, he lay himself upon the bed, until in his imagination he heard the clock, now associated with the beat of his heart—bump—bump—bump—bump—

His head tightened and, unable to constrain himself any longer, he dropped his hands from his ears and stood, sweat forming on his forehead. Then as if propelled by some unseen force he placed one foot out, then the other, and began the tiresome pace across the room.

The clock was clamoring as he took four hurried steps at each end of the room, and his heart, which had worked for longer than its intended span, pounded to a deafening roar.

The clock in the corner ticked incessantly, gradually becoming louder until his ears could not stand its deafening clatter, and he raised himself from his bed and slowly paced the length of the room.

His thumping feet marked time with the regular monotonous beat of the clock in the corner, and as he turned at each successive end of the room, he hurried four short steps forward to stay in time with this militant machine.

Fifteen minutes went by, and now under the spell of the steady tick of the clock, he pushed his aging body to comply with this demanding tick—tick—tick—.

His feeble mind unable to cope with the dictates of its demoniacal urgings, he hurried his failing steps, and at last spent from his exhaustive efforts he stumbled to his bed and fell forward.

The clock no longer mattered, its drone filled his head, and he prayed to God for death.

First he muttered his plea, then gaining courage, he pleaded the louder for death to come—and even as he implored, the rain came—softly—comfortingly—and he slept.

* * * * *

The sun was shining when he awoke, and as he viewed the brightness of the day he reconstructed the happenings of the previous night.

The realization of what had transpired was vividly clear—so clear that he knelt and prayed to God to preserve his mind, knowing while he prayed he must rid his room of the clock.

His mind made up, he rose and dressed, and as he walked across the room he stopped fearfully, sensing that his steps had been in harmony with the clock's tick—tick—tick—tick—

Alas, Poor Cobb

By ROBERT C. HEALEY, '39

SUNDAY nights were awful. Most of the gang was away and you couldn't even raise an echo downtown. Tod sauntered along Oak Street, pausing to pluck a thick blade of wild grass to chew.

Yep! Mrs. Hawkins on the front porch as usual. Afraid to miss a thing. Post Office closed, a sick kerosene lamp burning inside. Things were dead, just dead. If only Gert were around and he could get a few minutes to talk with her. But Maurie would be around, the double-crosser. Someday there'd be a murder and sixteen-year-old Tod Manton would be dragged away to jail. Anything goes in war and—in love, especially when you're in love a lot.

There was someone around, though. In fact, there were three figures hanging on the fence outside Maurie's. That Maurie! Why on earth did everyone have to go for him. Especially the girls. It was his line—that terribly important way in which he could spout drivel. He'd get his neck broken someday.

Cal and Tom were standing with Maurie. Maurie was in shirt sleeves, torn shirt-sleeves at that. Cal and Tom weren't dressed up, either.

"Hiya, Tod," they greeted.

"Gee, I could go for her." Maurie went right on saying.

"What you fellows doin' tonight?" Tod butted in.

His aged legs moved faster and became heavier as the exacting seconds ticked—

He ran now—awkwardly—back and forth, his face blue from exertions too great, and finally lifting his hands pitifully toward his heart he fell—gasping loudly—less audibly—and finally not at all.

The clock in the corner ticked on.

Tick—Tick—Tick—Tick.

To Her

Even all my dreams of beauty, yes,
And all my thoughts of gold,
Daren't hope to vie in loveliness
With thee whom I behold.

Oh, beauteous maid, oh heavenly joy,
Thou canst not leave me thus:
The victim of thy lips, a boy,
So lifted by thy trust.

Give me but chance to gaze on thee,
Fear not that I should tell,
But love and kiss me lovingly,
Lest words should end the spell.

When spent is this, our brief, sweet hour,
And heaven calls thee near,
But pluck and kiss the lily flower,
That I may hold it dear.

THOMAS FARRELL, '42.

Alas, Poor Cobb

way, every girl in town can recognize his line by now. They've got his number."

Cal didn't think so—"Curly hair, a smile and a little soft soap can accomplish wonders."

Before anyone could say more, Maurie came bouncing down the front steps.

"Say, what'd you have to get all dolled up for?" Tom immediately objected.

"Aw, I just cleaned up a little. Well, are we goin'?"

"Yeah, I guess so." They started down the street, Cal walking with Tod, and Tom trailing silently with Maurie.

It was pretty well dark now. The moon, playing tag with a few lazy clouds, threw a soft sheeny light. They walked away from the center of town. When Maurie and Tom passed, Cal trailed behind with Tod. In a moment he was glad they were behind. Tom and Maurie had met Evelyn and were walking with her. He felt guilty for letting Tom slip off with Maurie.

"Look, there's Evelyn with Tom and Maurie," Tod finally observed.

"Yeah, and Maurie's monopolizing things already. Poor Tom. He's dragging his feet along. Let's stay back here."

"Aw, come on. Don't let them walk just anyplace, Cal. We want to go up by Gert's."

"You've been up there three times this week. Couldn't you cut it for a night?"

"Gert's swell, Cal. You don't know her. Swellest girl I've ever met."

"Gee, kid, these summer romances churn up a lotta crazy ideas."

"Aw, she's sweet, Cal. And it isn't just summer. It's the real stuff."

“She’s on from New York, I think,” said Maurie, ignoring the question.

“Guess we’ll go walking,” Cal answered. Tod liked Cal better than any other fellow in town. He had been around. He knew all about girls and even if he did act a bit queer at times he was a swell guy.

“So you’re goin’ walkin’,” Maurie perked up. “Wait a minute and I’ll get cleaned up.” He slipped into the house.

“That’s what gets me, fellas,” drawled Tom after a minute or so. “That guy’ll go in now and put on his best stuff just so he’ll be able to shine if we meet the girls.”

“And what’ll you do if we meet the girls?” grinned Tod.

Tom would probably like to run away if he met them, but he knew he’d stay. Love is like that. You fall for someone swell, someone like Evelyn who has everything, and then you can’t get anywhere. Can’t even say a word when she’s around. What do two persons talk about, anyway?

“Don’t mind him, Tom,” Cal said. “Just keep after her. She’ll give in some day. They all do, if you go long enough.”

Cal was always sympathetic. And he knew what he was talking about. Tod often wished he had Cal’s level-headedness and common sense.

“There’s just one thing,” Cal went on. “Don’t let Maurie realize that you’re too interested in Evelyn. He’s the type who likes to play around with all of them, especially when he sees some other fellow’s interested. That goes for you, too, Tod.”

Tod wanted to feel that he had command of the situation and he countered that everything was going swell. He hated to admit, even to himself, that he was getting no place.

“I won’t let Maurie get near Gert,” he insisted. “Any-

Alas, Poor Cobb

They were passing the old Baptist cemetery. Cal peered in and pretended to see things. Tod wasn't scared. They had roamed through the old place before and there was nothing in it, just a lot of foolish looking stones. Past the cemetery, and they were at Gert's house. The others were waiting for them under the tall hedges.

"You see. I told you they weren't home," Maurie said.

"They are. Just wait." Tod rushed up to the front door, dragging Cal with him. From behind the hedges the others heard someone answer the bell.

"Hullo."

"Doin' anything tonight?"

"No, but I'm tired, Tod. We just got back from swimming."

"Aw, come on. We're all goin' walkin'."

"Oh, all right. I'll be with you in a minute."

After a long minute she appeared. Gert really wasn't much to look at. It all depended on the way you looked and Tod always looked straight into her eyes—which were of delicious china blue. Tonight she was wearing a cute dirndl and a crew cap. She greeted them and started off with Tod, as the others followed.

"Where we goin'?" someone said.

"I tell you," suggested Tod, "let's walk through the cemetery."

"The cemetery!"

"Yeah, I bet it's loads of fun. Ghosts and all that."

"Oh, Tod, don't say that. You get me all scared."

"They won't hurt you."

"I don't want to go in there."

"Don't be a scare-baby all your life."

"Well, shall we go in?"

They caught up with the others. Five abreast, they walked along the gravel walk.

“Where we goin’?” Maurie said, striding along beside Evelyn. Tom was feeling left out on the other side of her.

“Just up by the cemetery and around the bend,” Tod nonchalantly answered.

“So you want to go up to Gert’s again,” Maurie jeered. “Well, they’re not home. I saw the whole crowd drive by about four o’clock.”

“I think they’re gone to Spring Lake,” Evelyn added.

“We can go up that way anyhow.” Tod wouldn’t give in. Cal groaned and they started off.

Cal and Tod fell back again. Cal started telling Tod about his chance to go to normal school in September. But he wanted to be a state trooper and he knew he could get an appointment if he waited a year. He was having a hard time deciding.

“What do you think I should do, Tod?”

Tod was delighted to be able to pass out advice for a change. But when he tried to put his ideas together he was stumped.

“I dunno,” he stammered. “I always wanted to be a teacher, but those troopers sure do look snazzy.”

“I’m afraid to decide. I don’t know what to do.”

“Don’t worry, Cal. It’ll work out, just wait.”

They turned up the King’s Highway towards the cemetery. There were no sidewalks and they had to dodge passing cars. The moonlight lit up the road, except when the glaring arcs from the cars came sweeping by. Snowlike, the moonglow covered the road, but on each side of the silvered lane the fields were dark. Leafy trees shut out the light and cut weird shadows.

Alas, Poor Cobb

“But really it’s not so funny,” someone quickly responded.

“But it is,” Gert insisted, “just think of Cobb. He probably grouched about everything—and here we are sitting on top of him and he can’t do a thing about it.”

“Oh, he wasn’t a bad sort. He had his faults, I suppose, but he wasn’t a bad fellow at that.”

They looked at each other and then wildly realized that none of them had spoken. No one moved. The moon had caught up with the clouds and was hiding her face. Huge chunks of darkness covered them. There was the impulse to run, but no one ran. They just sat and trembled.

Cal was the only one brave enough to break the frigid silence:

“Then, you . . . er, you must be a ghost,” he gulped.

“Yes, technically, but there really aren’t any ghosts, just spirits,” the voice came back. It sounded liquescent like the flow of cool water through the hand. It sounded young. It even sounded ageless. It held them spellbound with fluent melody.

“Could you tell me what it’s like?” Gert finally gasped.

“Like? Oh, perhaps you mean death. But you’re too young to think of that. So much stretches before you that you may seize and take and drink. Death isn’t something horrible. It’s pure, the release of all the good that’s in you.”

“But life doesn’t go along a straight path. You find yourself in a muddle,” objected Cal.

“You have to settle that muddle. You have to take each moment, each thing and make them yours. Every single thing that is can mean something to you no matter how trivial it seems. The morning mist rising from the cool waters of a creek. A dog limping painfully along a country road with a

“Might as well.”

A gravel road left the King’s Highway and went up the hill into the cemetery. They turned in by the iron gates and started up the road. Through the trees shone the fitful radiance of the moon.

“Ouch!” someone gasped, tripping over a rock.

“Sh! you’ll wake the dead.”

“Maurie, don’t say that. You make me gasp.”

“Do I?—”

Around them the trees were snarled and brooding. Tumultuous shapes rose up among the stark tombs. At last high up on the hill where the mass of trees shut out almost all light they stopped. They sat down on the base of a huge tombstone.

“This is swell,” said Tod.

“Kid stuff,” Cal added.

No one wanted to say much. Someone suggested hide-and-go-seek, but it was voted down. Suddenly Maurie got up and stared at the tombstone.

“I wonder who’s buried here.”

He lit a match and spelled out the lettering: “Here lies Theodore Cobb, 1846-1876.”

“Maybe he was in the Civil War,” Tom suggested.

“Naw, he was too young,” Cal said.

They sat around wondering about Mr. Cobb. The idea of this person named Cobb fascinated them.

“It’d be funny if we could see ourselves, say twenty years from now, when we’re all old, like this fellow Cobb,” answered Evelyn.

“It’s funny,” said Gert, “but someday we’ll be like him and people will come and sit on top of us and wonder what we were like.”

Alas, Poor Cobb

Tod was very thoughtful. He looked into the night and said:

“I know, that’s all so true. But if you’re just a dumb fellow who doesn’t know very much, and who puts his foot in it everytime he opens his mouth, it’s not so hot.”

“Some know the facts of life and shout about them. Others know just the meaning of life. They keep quiet. They live quietly and die happily. Those who rant and shout and who have always something to say are merely part of the surface. Learn to look behind and know the meaning. If you’re dumb, be dumb sincerely; if you’re a genius, be a genius intelligently. In both cases you can be great. Do, inwardly or outwardly, but don’t just talk.”

Tod looked at Maurie and Maurie looked at Tod. Cal looked at both of them and smiled. From the girls came no words. Quiet and darkness oppressed the little hill. Suddenly the moon jumped from behind the cloud and once threw its weird light on the trees. There was only one voice to be heard:

“I must go now. But please come again. The young in heart visit me so seldom.”

The six figures sat on the base of the tombstone. For minutes they did not rise. Finally they got up and walked silently towards the road. They felt too satisfied and too deep in their own thoughts to speak. When they reached the iron gates of the cemetery Maurie stopped and turned around. He looked back into the darkness and said slowly and yearningly, “I wish I could grow up to be a ghost like that.” and then they all walked back to the town.

hurt paw. Even sitting here in the dark and thinking. All these can fit into the grand mosaic of living. You must make them mean something to you. We have our problems and muddles, but we have to jump at them and think them out. Don't decide because of someone else but be your own guide, taking the right course, because you feel it is right."

"That's just the way I've been thinking," replied Cal.

"But suppose things don't work out the way you want them," interjected Tom. "You know, you try and try, and nothing comes of it."

"The secret goes deeper than doing something. If you know that you've worked hard, if you've been honest in every effort, then success means nothing."

"When you're in love with someone an awful lot and you can't do a thing about it, what then?" Tom demanded.

"Aw, don't bother him with your little affairs. He ain't interested," muttered Maurie.

"But everyone's affairs are great. They become great because they are the whole particular life of some particular person. You may be in what you may call love, and someone may jeer at you. Don't mind him. Push yourself along. Until that fellow realizes he has to sympathize and aid those around him, he is lost.

"I said something about love, but that's such a bad word. You're all so young and all these trials of fancy are leading to something terribly big. These little flights seem to end in disaster, but they are teaching you something about the wider flights."

"Gee, that sounds swell," Gert tossed back her head and drank in the night.

Evelyn agreed. She wished she had thought of it like that before.

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The Glory of an Empire

By MATTHEW P. GALLAGHER, '41

IN 1847 the Great Famine prostrated Ireland with starvation and death. The peasants awoke one morning and beheld an awe-inspiring sight. The land was covered with a thick and putrifying fog—a mist not unlike poison gas, in form and effect. A blight came upon the potatoes and they shriveled and decayed. Death hovered in the stinking air and visited both young and old. There was hardly a household in the land which had not felt the sting. Long days passed and pestilence followed in the wake of death. Throughout the day the people went abroad in quest of food and during the night they cried to heaven, “O Lord, mercy!” But there came no mercy and a million men succumbed to disease and their lifeless bodies fell by the wayside, to be left unburied. Their friends were too weak to dig their graves.

In the heart of the wild Kerry Mountains, in Rath Beagh, there stood a humble thatch-roofed cabin bravely withstanding the encroachments of time. A free-holder, on the great estate of the Daurins, lay on his pallet convulsed with alternating fevers and chills. His once beautiful daughter, now withered and emaciated, sat by his side and bathed his forehead. Outside, the first chill winds of approaching winter sobbed under the eaves and tugged ominously at the sagging door. A dying peat fire smouldered in the fireplace, feebly attempting to keep off the encompassing cold. But

The Glory of an Empire

the fire died. And later in the night the man died. As the poor old man moaned his last, "Oh, God!" his daughter fell to her knees and dropped her head upon his breast and tried to cry, but she couldn't, for her body was a living corpse. After a time, however, she seemed to become inspired with a new found strength and, wrapping herself in a blanket, she moved resolutely out into the night.

That morning her young husband, his eyes burning with fever, had gone forth to the great house in search of food. But he had not returned, so his bride now ventured out to search for him. As she slowly groped her way along the rutted road, her toe struck a rigid body and she shrank back in horror. Peering intensely into the darkness she perceived the form of a man, and then in an instant, knowing that it was her husband, she threw herself upon him, sobbing hysterically. She shook his head and called his name over and over again. "Nap, Nap, oh, speak to me!" And she dropped to his side and rubbed his wrist and slapped his cheeks. "He's not dead; Nap cannot die; he is strong," and she breathed into his mouth and tried to fill his lungs. Then taking her blanket she put it under his head and rose to get water. There was water in the gutter not three feet from his head, but her mind was benumbed with tragedy, and hysterically she ran to a brook she had seen a quarter of a mile back along the road. She filled her mouth with water and likewise her shoes, and as she struggled back to the body of her loved one her feet became torn and they bled. Three times during that tragic mission she dropped to her bruised knees and lifting her eyes to heaven she sobbed, "Please, don't let him die." And when she reached him she cried pitifully when she found that she had no water left, for she had spilled it all during that terrible race. In agony she lay down beside him once again and threw her

arms around his cold body and kissed him. But she did not cry now because pain had shocked her to her senses and she knew that he was dead.

A week later, the British viceroy, riding along that road, saw the bodies of the boy and the girl lying in the gutter, and he said, stroking his beard, "A terrible condition. Something will have to be done about this." Whereupon he took another pinch of snuff and proceeded on his way, his mind already filled with contemplations of the pleasures which awaited him at the next tavern.

Shortly thereafter, the "Irish Liberator," Daniel O'Connell, rose from his sick bed, to which he had retreated after a sickness contracted in an English prison, and he dragged himself to London. There in the House of Commons he stood up before the men who hated him as few men have been hated since the beginning of time. They were shocked to see that broken giant holding on to the speaker's desk and pleading his country's cause in a scarcely audible whisper; they hardly believed their eyes when they saw him break down and weep, and heard him cry, "Have mercy on my people." He pictured for them the suffering in Ireland and begged for relief. Then as he was being assisted from the chamber, the dying warrior turned for one last look at the scene of Ireland's greatest disillusionment. That pause was long enough for him to hear the House *reject* a relief bill for Ireland.

And as he turned, a whisper was heard throughout the House, "Well, if what he says is true, it looks as if there will be no more Irish question—thank God."

The Common Touch

By LIONEL J. LANDRY, '40

MARK PAWLSON was out of sorts. So was the rest of the good company in the drab boarding-house parlor. The rain was coming down in tankfuls in the street outside. Only two forty-watt bulbs shone with a listless palor in the red and white crystal lustre that hung on the ceiling. Numerous photographs of the landlady's "folks", taken in the ridiculous 20's, stood forlornly on the dark, long table in the bay window. A doll, a prize-souvenir from an amusement park, stood ever still on the player-piano, her big lacquered eyes never once turning away from their accustomed focus, her faded blue flounces never once stirring. Lamps you couldn't light. A piano you couldn't play. A living-room where you couldn't live. A landlady who wasn't a lady. He smiled at the contradictions of the place.

Mr. Zuchs, pudgy, round, bald, liked to play with his false teeth, shoving them now this way, now that, with quick little "clacks" that resounded through the whole room. Miss Olman, neither old nor young, nearsighted and nondescript, sat across from him and was busy paring her nails. Mrs. Goldthorpe just looked bored, her high-feathered hat in her lap. Mark looked at her for a long time. She might have been forty or forty-five. Her hair was dyed, obviously; it was a shade of blonde between red and yellow, lustreless, stiff in spite of a permanent. Her mouth was only a line, smeared around with

bright red lipstick, as if color and brightness could ever make voluptuous a mouth as hard as hers or render soft lips that had never smiled through any real happiness. There were deep lines in her cheeks and on each side of her mouth, and they showed in spite of her over-rouging. She looked doggedly out of the window, chewing her gum more violently at each car that passed by the entrance.

“Lousy weather, ain’t it?” she sighed.

“It most certainly is, isn’t it?” smiled Mr. Zuchs, his smile half apology for having ventured to speak, half-pleasure at having been spoken to. “I can’t go out on account of this rain. My arthritis, you know.” He looked hopefully at Mrs. Goldthorpe, to see if she would carry on the conversation. He was disappointed. She went on chewing her gum.

He turned to Miss Olman, who by now was holding her nails up to the light. “I’ve never seen it rain so much before,” he said. “And I’ve lived in this city for sixty-four years, man and boy. Terrible, I’ve never seen so much rain.” Miss Olman looked disapprovingly at him and said “Really?” in such a discouraging way that he went back to clacking his false teeth.

Then the MacRaes came in. They were rather a young couple. No children. They were quite nice. He was a book-keeper somewhere. She didn’t work, not that anybody knew of. They seldom went out, and usually stayed in and played cribbage under the two forty-watt bulbs in the living room.

When, about 8:30, Mrs. Curry, the landlady, walked in, the whole household was there. Mark noticed that she greeted everyone in a particularly nice way that night. Everyone, not him alone. Even if she was nice, though, it wouldn’t do her much good as far as he was concerned. She surely wouldn’t be paid this week. Nor the next. Nor the next after. Not unless someone bought some of his stories.

The Common Touch

He appraised Mrs. Curry carefully, taking in her tired gray eyes, her streaked hair done up in a style almost as old as the doll on the piano. Her hands were rough and coarse, her dress a bit stained and wrinkled. The thought suddenly struck him that a description of her might almost surely embody that nebulous quality which the publishers called "the common touch". Ever since he had been writing, people had told him that he lacked "that certain something" which made real, vibrant, living characters. He'd been walking with kings and lost contact with the inhabitants of the kingdom. His characters had been the types of persons who frequented luxurious hotels, who moved in worlds of mink and champagne, who generally had exaggerated psychological traits and talked of the bourgeoisie.

But this Mrs. Curry—it was really strange how he had never noticed the possibilities she might present. He wondered what her past must have been like. She certainly would make a good short story subject, at least. He watched her sit down on the creaking sofa. She unconsciously smoothed her hair over with the back of her hand, as if her hands were still wet from dishwashing. Her skirt, which had gone askew, she twisted back into normalcy. All about her suggested an air of fatigue, mental and physical. "She'll make a good subject," reflected the writer. "I'll have to watch her."

The young couple under the two forty-watt bulbs played mechanically.

"Fifteen-two."

"Fifteen-four and two's six."

"My deal."

Mrs. Goldthorpe took to caressing the long feather on her hat. She toyed with it mechanically, never ceasing to look out of the weeping window. Her sighs of growing annoyance

grew more audible and more frequent. Miss Olman, her manicuring complete, had taken up a confessions magazine with a startlingly colored cover. The silence was broken only by the regular "Two, Nine. Fifteen-two. Twenty-five. Go." of the MacRaes. Besides this monotonous litany the only sound was the occasional rustle of a magazine page being turned over by Miss Olman or the creaking of the sofa under Mrs. Curry.

In the midst of this quiet, the clatter of the doorbell took on an unusual loudness. Mrs. Curry unhurriedly crossed the room to the entry as Mrs. Goldthorpe, peering into the rainy darkness, exclaimed, "Looks like Western Union from here." Everyone was at attention when Mrs. Curry threw open the front door and admitted the splash sound of the pelting rain into the parlor.

"Telegram for Mr. Zuchs," announced a soulless voice in the darkness.

Mr. Zuchs rose swiftly and shuffled to the entry.

"Sign here, please," the soulless voice requested.

For a moment no noise was heard save the steady swish of the rain beating on the pavement outside. The door swung to sharply and the sound ceased abruptly. Mr. Zuchs walked back holding the envelope up to the light. Mrs. Curry followed him in and silently resumed her seat.

Mark Pawlson watched her as she riveted her attention on the yellow envelope. He thought he saw a sudden excited gleam flare up in her eyes and then disappear as soon as it had come. The others stared as he tore open one end of the envelope. The MacRaes looked on half-heartedly, anxious to resume their game. Mrs. Goldthorpe gave up looking at passing automobiles and stared at Mr. Zuchs. Miss Olman had cast down her confessions magazine and took no pains to conceal her curiosity.

The Common Touch

The yellow paper suddenly began quivering in the old gentleman's hands and tiny beads of sweat formed on his bald head.

Mark again thought he saw that fugitive gleam in Mrs. Curry's eye.

"Why, Mr. Zuchs! What on earth is the matter with you?" exclaimed Miss Olman.

"It's—it's Howard, my son. He—he's dead. I—he—Oh, what's to become of me now?" He slumped into a chair, still scanning every letter of the telegram, giving vent to smothered moans. "Howie—Oh, Howie—."

The MacRaes edged toward the door. "Poor old man. How sad!" the wife said as they slipped out.

"What can I do now?" the old man babbled to himself. "I can't work. I'm so old. I'm so old."

"But didn't he leave you nuthin'? Insurance or anythin'?" queried Miss Olman's reedy voice. "Seems to me he shoulda left you something. After all, you are his father. Didn't he have any bank-books. What did he do for a livin', anyway, if I'm not too nosey?"

"Well, you are dearie." Mrs. Goldthorpe had dropped her hat and stood directly behind Miss Olman. "I don't figure it's any of your business what he was. Leave Mr. Zuchs alone. He's got enough ta worry about without answerin' your questions."

Mrs. Curry almost arose from her sofa, then relaxed again when she heard Mr. Zuchs' faltering voice. "Oh, it's all right, Mrs. Goldthorpe, I don't mind it. Howie was head of a casting office in New York. I think it was a casting office he called it. He used to hire actors for shows and plays; that was his profession. He made good for a while, too. Then he lost his money somehow and I hardly ever heard of him except

at the end of each month. He's sent me money to—well, to live on. It wasn't much, but it was enough for me to pay my rent and maybe buy a few clothes. Funny thing, too, he never used the Zuchs name in business. He called himself Gordon Howard instead of Howard Zuchs, like he'd been named."

"But didn't he—" Miss Olman was saying.

"Wait a minute," interrupted Mrs. Goldthorpe. "What was his name? In business I mean."

"Gordon Howard."

"Gordon Howard," she repeated to herself. "Yeah, Gordon Howard. You're his father, hey? I knew him once. He was a damned good guy, Gordon. He was a fall guy, sometimes, but . . ."

"You knew Howard?" asked Mr. Zuchs incredulously.

"Yes, yes, I knew him."

"But how—how did you—"

"Oh, you know, Mr. Zuchs, in the show business one meets all kinds of people," remarked Miss Olman acidly.

"Well, I've been in the show business myself. In choruses most of the time. The show business ain't always peaches, you know. I've danced and sung in just about every kind of place you can think of, from cheap honky-tonks where we were eight girls in one stuffy, stinky dressing-room to places like the Schumanns' Theater.

"Well, it was when I was in the chorus line at the Golden Bird in the lower East Side that I got my first sight of Gordon Howard. I'd a wondered what he was doin' in that beery dive, if I hadn't of heard that him and some big-time actors was slummin' around doin' the town up.

"Between shows me and a couple other girls, we went out to see him if he couldn't find us a job in a new show he was supposed to cast. It was the 'Comedies of 1924'. Well, he

The Common Touch

put in a word for us or something and three of us got jobs dancing in it. I guess he must a been just a softie to get us them jobs.

“I kept the job dancing until the night before the show went out on the road. Then I dunno, I guess I musta slipped on somethin’. Right in the middle of a number I just wobbled down and busted my ankle. And me in the front line. They had to stop the show, I guess, ’cause the manager bawled me out till he was blue in the face. But I just didn’t pay no attention to him.

“They took me home with about a week’s pay ahead of me. They said they’d take care of the doctor’s bills, but I knew I couldn’t go a heck of a long ways on that week’s pay. So just when it looks like the poorhouse, I gets this check and a letter from Gordon Howard, telling me everything’s O. K. He loans me enough money till I’m on my feet again. I was pretty well all washed up as a hoofer, so here I am wonderin’ what to do when Howard ups and gets me a matron’s job in a big-time movie theater. I kept that job for five years, till I got married.

“But I ain’t forgotten what he done me yet, Mr. Zuchs. Gee, I never woulda guessed you and him was even related. Anyway I’m pretty sure I can find something for you so’s you won’t have to worry much. Not a gold-mine—ya get me?—but somethin’ that oughta help you. It’ll keep you up. Now why don’t you go upstairs and get some rest, Mr. Zuchs. It’ll do you good.”

“Yes, Mr. Zuchs. I’m sure that with Mrs. Goldthorpe trying to get something for you, you haven’t a reason in the world to worry. *Some* women generally get anything they want, you know,” chirped Miss Olman maliciously.

The implication was not lost upon Mrs. Goldthorpe; but the tooting of an automobile horn outside made her gather

up her hat, snatch her purse off the piano, and run out into the rain. Mr. Zuchs, his head bowed, walked slowly to the stairway and trudged up to his room. Miss Olman plunged again into the contents of the magazine with the lurid cover.

Mark Pawlson had been observing Mrs. Curry and at moments during that hour he had seen her eyes gleam with a fugitive spark of excitement, her resigned attention during Mrs. Goldthorpe's narration. He had seen her fix her skirt and smoothe her hair as she sat on the creaking sofa.

"A good subject," thought the writer. "If I can ever describe her I'll have obtained the common touch."



Solitary Solitude

By JOHN T. HAYES, '40

“YOUR eyes, my sweet Anita, how they sparkle tonight. Surely it must be the wine, or would it be love for me, Anita, that makes them shine so, eh?”

“No, no,” she said, laughing softly. If they sparkle it is but the fire light reflected in them,” and her soft sigh followed a tiny waft of flame up the chimney. The wind whirled about the house and drove flurries of snow against the windows with such force that it seemed as if the next gust would surely drive them in. At times the wind coming down the chimney would cause a back draught, and smoke would blow back into the room and tiny sparks pop from the burning log like a million shooting stars. Then in the lull that followed, the log would glow brighter, and as the tall flames chased each other up the chimney, the light would fall full on the faces of the man and woman. Showing her soft, round, happy face, and shining eyes, and her fair hair gold tinted by the fire light. Sometimes her lips would part in a half smile, as if she were thinking of something very, very pleasant, and her teeth would show in white contrast to her red lips. And Anton, turning toward her, and letting his eyes travel from her small black slippers, along her bare white leg, to her tight fitting jacket and finally resting on her face, which was flushed and downcast under his steady gaze, would say: “Oh, Anita, if only my luck would change you would make a lovely

little wife." And his eyes would leave her face and their somber light would follow the tiny dancing flames.

She was silent for a while, and the wind was the only sound. He sat turning the ring on his finger, lost in thought. Then she spoke, and there was a husky note in her voice. "It might be, Anton, that a change in luck would bring a change in you. Is it not best that we are happy?" He ran a hurried hand through his dark hair, and answered her. "No, no, Anita, it would not do. We would be unhappy and soon grow to hate each other. It is better that we wait."

Her eyes were on him as she spoke. "I could never hate you, Anton, even if you left me." Her words, soft spoken, were scarcely audible above the blast of wind which then roared about the house. Again there was silence. Again and again it was broken by the wind and the steady cracking of the fire. Finally Anton sighed wearily, and getting slowly to his feet said: "I must go now before the storm grows worse. It is far to the village and the road will soon be impassable." Anita said nothing. Rising, she went to the corner of the room opposite the open fire, and, taking his heavy coat from the bed where she had put it, brought it to him. She watched him getting into it, and noting the worried look in his eyes, she said with a wistful half smile: "You are not happy, Anton. What is it that troubles you?" He looked deep into her eyes for a moment before he spoke: "There is a lovely apple, Anita, that I would pick, but I have not the gold with which to reach it." He was speaking vaguely, but the meaning of his words was not lost on her. They stood facing each other before the fire, and on the wall behind them their shadows danced a grotesque dance to the piping of the flames. A strange feeling of uneasiness and loss stole over Anita. "Would it be," she said, "that your gold might carry

Solitary Solitude

your heart to a higher branch than the apple?" "Darling Anita," he said, tilting her head back with his hand beneath her chin. "Darling Anita, there is nothing above the apple," and he kissed her lightly on the lips. Still their shadows danced to the piping of the flames. His words did not ease the feeling of loss about her heart, but she said nothing.

"Well," said Anton, pulling on his big cap, "I must go. No," he said as she made to follow him, "do not come to the door; it is cold in the hall and you will be chilled." And bending down, he kissed her again. "I do not mind the cold," she said and followed him.

When they got to the door, she had to help him pull it open, for it had frozen tight. But when it was opened, they stood facing a drift of snow against the door, as high as Anton's hips. The wind whirled snow into the hallway, and Anita gave a startled little cry as it whipped against her legs. Anton closed the door quickly, and peering out of the window saw that the road was piled high with drifted snow. "God," he said, "it is far worse than I thought. I will never make the village tonight." He stepped back quickly from the window as a blast of snow was driven against it. "God save us!" cried Anita. "It is a blizzard. You would surely be lost if you attempted to make the village tonight." She was silent a moment, and then Anton turned toward her. "Anita," he said, "I must. I cannot spend the night here." His voice was half questioning.

When Anton awoke he found that Anita was already up. He could hear her out in the shed, and glancing at the fire which was now but a pile of greying embers, he guessed that she was getting wood. He stood up and went to the window and his eyes blinked at the sudden brightness of the snow. The storm had spent itself and the sun was already

high. He heard Anita come into the room, but he did not turn to her. "You are up, Anton?" she said, and turning he saw her bending to put wood on the fire. "It will soon be warm in here and the tea will be hot." "Yes," he said, and his voice sounded far away. For a time a heavy silence hung between them. Anita busied herself preparing the tea while Anton stood gazing out the window, beating a nervous tattoo with his fingers on the glass. He moved restlessly, his fingers beat more rapidly, and then he turned to her. "Anita," he said, and his voice was strained, and somewhat breathless, as if his heart was fighting against what his lips were saying, and he spoke with difficulty. "Anita, I must go away. I—I have business in the city. I know, I know," he said, as he caught the look of reproach and surprise in her eyes, "I should have told you last night. It slipped my mind. I will be back soon, Anita, do not fear, very soon." She tried to look into his eyes and read there the lie to the fear that was gripping her heart; but she could not, for while he spoke his eyes moved restlessly about the room, and when he finished speaking he took up his coat and having put it on, he took her two hands in his and looking down at them said quickly, "Good-bye, Anita." He did not kiss her and she did not follow him to the door. Later when she had had her tea, and the fire was cracking cheerily in the corner, she went to the window, her face a grey mask, and looking out at the pure whiteness of the world, her eyes rested on the track of Anton's snowshoe, the only mark on a spot-world, and turning from it she wept bitterly.

This was the end of December. It was not until very near the end of March that Anita received her first letter from Anton. He was still in the city and would be delayed for some months.

Solitary Solitude

The days dragged by, one following the other in a monotonous chain. And as they passed, Anita grew more worried and very sad. When the spring came she could be seen moving around her little garden, tending the tiny flower beds. And only on Sundays did she leave her house to go to the village, and then only to go to the church. And when summer came and her tiny flower beds were in bloom and the nights were long and soft, she was not even seen in the village on Sunday. For now she was heavy with child and she dared not show herself in public. It was a great sorrow to her to miss the consolation of her church and to be thus shut off from the world. For a time her near neighbors called to visit with her, but she would not open the door to them. And if she chanced to be in the garden when she saw them coming along the road, she would hurry into the house and remain there until they had passed by, or, having come to the door and receiving no answer to their repeated knocks, had gone away shaking their heads and looking back at the house in a strange and puzzled manner.

And day by day Anita grew more to hate Anton and his dreams of riches. At first it was only anger at the thought that Anton had left her, but daily her own grief and shame weighed more and more heavily upon her mind, and in her heart she grew to despise and hate him.

The summer passed, and with the first of November the snow came. By December the winter had set in in earnest and once again pure white snow was piled high around the house. And at night Anita sat before the fire gazing into the flames with such coldness in her heart that all the fires in the world could not warm it. The shadows danced and the small flames piped, but she took no heed. The wind whirled about the house and hurled twisting columns of snow against the

windows, but Anita paid no heed. If the baby cried she would rise and go to it, and tuck the blanket more closely about its little head. And sitting on the edge of the bed she would croon a soft lullabye, and often she would weep before she had finished it, and falling to her knees would smother the child with tears and kisses.

Anita was not a strong woman. She was of a weak and dependent nature. Had she been otherwise she would have mixed with her neighbors, and no doubt in time would have lived down her shame. But this she could not do, and she had shut herself off from the world.

The friendship of Anton and Anita was well known to the people. And often on winter evenings before the great stove in the village store, the tragic turn which this friendship had taken was the topic of much discussion. And everyone agreed that it was not good for the young to be shut up with their sorrow.

And so it turned out. For one day the wife of the storekeeper passing along the road in front of Anita's house was surprised to see her on the porch beckoning to her. "Come," she called, "Come in dear and see my darling." And cautioning her surprised visitor to step softly, for the child was sleeping, led her into the house. There the babe lay wide awake on the bed. "See," she spoke softly, "Is he not a darling?" Then noticing that the child was awake, she cried out, "Oh oh, my baby, you must sleep and tomorrow Anton shall see what a fine lad you are." Then turning to the woman with a happy light in her eyes she said: "Yes, my dear, did you not know that Anton is coming tomorrow?" And taking a cloth from the pocket of her apron she went about dusting the furniture over and over again. Standing back and looking at the room now this way, now that way,

Solitary Solitude

she would go back to her dusting, never satisfied that the room was clean. The wife of the storekeeper after speaking a few kind words, and hurriedly kissing the baby, excused herself. There were tears shining in the eyes of the woman as Anita spoke to her for she knew, and the whole village knew that Anton was not coming back. "Do not forget to come tomorrow, dear, for Anton will be here and I know he will be very happy to see you." And as the woman went along the road she could hear Anita singing a wildly happy little song.

And always it was the same story. Day after day she called neighbors in to see the child, and always Anton was coming tomorrow. "Do not forget to come tomorrow, tomorrow Anton is coming." And the pitying neighbors told each other that it had turned out as they had said it would. "The child was too much alone. It is not good for the young to be alone.



One Never Knows

By IRA T. WILLIAMS, JR., '41

TIMES were good. Meyers was President of the Acme Taxi Company and considered himself quite a success in life. After twenty years in the taxi business he was ordered to retire because of ill health. But Meyers was not ready to quit. He did not want to leave his business yet. He had no hobby and he knew that he would be lost if he did not have his work to keep him busy. Finally after being persuaded that for him to continue in his position as executive would be detrimental to his health, Meyers retired and settled down to a life of ease and contentment. He sold his shares in the company and invested his money in other interests. He went to his home in the country and lived on his memories of other days.

He remembered the struggle that he had when first he came to the city and started a little business. Cars were only beginning to be seen on the streets and it was still not uncommon to see horse-drawn cars used for transportation. Meyers started his taxi business with one hack drawn by a horse. But as time went on the automobile was being used more and more and so Meyer invested his meager savings in the purchase of a new automobile and thus started his cab business in an up-to-date fashion. Soon Meyer's little business began to increase. The need for more cabs and drivers became a necessity and his interests began to expand. From one to three and from five

One Never Knows

to ten—until he had a fleet of speedy cabs that were second to none in the city.

Meyers had been able to save a small fortune and wisely invested it, so that if he should go, his family would be taken care of without worry. His son and daughter had both been graduated from college and were now successful in their own endeavors. Only Meyers and his faithful wife remained to share in the comforts of their hard earned wealth. So begrudgingly Meyers went to his farm to live in memories of other days.

It was while Meyers was living on his farm unmindful of worldly worries that the crash came. The crash was cruel to Meyers. It didn't wipe him out in a single blow but little by little it cut into his money so that it was tantalizingly cruel. With the major portion of his capital gone he sold his farm and went to live in the city. He and his wife rented an apartment on the West side of town. Meyers was saving the same as he did when first he began in the taxi business. He skimped and saved whenever possible. He stopped smoking. He sold the car that he considered unnecessary and he did everything that was possible to stem the odds that were slowly wearing away the walls of security that Meyers had so painstakingly built up.

But the inevitable was bound to come sooner or later. And bit by bit Meyers saw his money dwindle and disappear. He could do nothing about it, just hope and pray that times would get better before he was wiped out completely. But times didn't get better and soon Meyers last dollar was gone and he was defeated both in spirit and finances. He didn't want to apply for relief but he could do nothing else. He and his wife had to live and it was impossible to get a job. Nobody wanted an old man. But he wasn't old he thought. Why he

was only fifty-one and could still do a man's work if he had the chance. So Meyers continued to look for a job. He went every place that he could think of but to no avail.

Finally as a last resort, humbled and despondent over his efforts, he went to the Acme Taxi Company and applied for a job. They were surprised to see their former president in such a pitiful state of affairs and offered him a position—or hardly a position—but a job nevertheless—as a cab driver. So Meyers was working as a cab driver in the company where he once was president.



Loved I Not Honor More

By CHARLES T. MCGOVERN, '41

“SENTIMENTALISM? Well, I dunno. Sometimes it’s good, and sometimes it can get you into a lot of trouble.” The Old Timer was talking as we bent our elbows over the table in the tavern. We had just put the paper to bed, and across the street the Herald building stood, squat, black, and ugly in the darkness of a city night.

We egged him on. “You’re crazy, Bill. Nobody’s sentimental in this day and age. People go for realism.”

The Old Timer bristled. “My friend, you forget the Irish. They’re the most sentimental people in the world. And the thing that they’re most sentimental about is honor. It’s everything to them. I’ll tell you a story. It was back in the days just after the war. The nation had just won its biggest war, and began to realize its strength. Young kids who had been under tension for a year returned home and sought an outlet for all the murderous ways that had been taught them. There was no West for them to conquer as the Civil War veterans had done. So, they turned to the only available outlet, bootlegging and the infant rackets. And because some veterans became crooks, there were cops.

Mike Ryan was Irish, six feet, one and a quarter. Today he would have become a guard at Notre Dame, but in those days, because he was Irish and had a body to sell, he did what his father and grandfather had done, he became a cop.

In those days I was a police reporter. I met Mike in the course of my visits to precinct stations and night courts. He was a likeable kid, and laughed at me because I was cynical about the idea that there was any possibility of salvaging the crooks and killers that were hauled in. A year at the front with the marines had instilled in me the idea that a bayonet was the best instrument for dealing with those who would destroy you. One night we were sitting in the station house, talking on every conceivable topic. I, absent-mindedly, quoted a line, "My dear, I could not love you one half so much, loved I not honor more." Instantly Mike looked up. "There's a lot of thought in that," he said. "Nuts," I scoffed, "you're just a sentimental Irishman."

"Where did you hear that line?"

"I heard it in a cafe in Paris. We were on leave. There was a British flyer with us, and he said that in toasting a cafe hangeron who was sitting beside him. She was so dumb she thought he insulted her. It was funny, though; the poor kid was shot down a week before the Armistice. That's what he got for loving honor so much."

"You're a cynic, Bill. I think the kid had the right idea. 'Loved I not honor,' there's something to that."

Well, it was about that time that Mike met Fran. She was a nice enough kid all right. A smooth looking blonde with a lot of class. But she had an older brother, who was just back from France. Being an adventurous lad, he got mixed up with "Fixer" Lavoie and his mob. They ran liquor in from the Sound and controlled the liquor racket in the whole city. Mike told the kid to get away from them and keep out of trouble, but the kid stuck with them, and was picked up several times. He managed to beat the charge each time, but by now every cop knew him.

"Loved I Not Honor More"

Well, Mike asked Fran to marry him, and she accepted. Then the question of her brother popped up, and it looked as though that brother would queer everything. Mike again told the kid to quit the racket. The kid told Mike that he was just a dumb harness bull. The kid further told Mike to keep out of his way. He said that if Mike ever met him on a job, he'd blast Mike wide open. Mike didn't say anything. Just let the kid blow off steam. But Fran didn't like the idea of her brother and her future husband shooting it out in an East Side street. She pleaded with her brother, but the kid had had a taste of big money and wasn't listening to any reform lectures. So she asked Mike to quit the force. Mike refused, and as a result she gave him back his ring.

Then Bugs Lynch moved into town and tried to take over Lavoie's territory. There was a lot of shooting, but no casualties. Mike tried to forget about Fran and didn't see her for a long time. Then one night when Mike was on his beat he met her. Fran was nervous, and Mike knew that something was wrong. She wouldn't tell him what was the trouble. He talked with her for a few minutes and then he heard it. Shots broke the silence of the dingy street. Mike started down the street, but Fran grabbed his arm. "Don't, Mike. It's my brother."

Mike shook her off and headed down the street. There was a car parked outside a house. As Mike approached, he saw it was Lynch's house. He knew then what it was. Lavoie's men were paying Lynch a visit. The driver of the car shot once at Mike, and Mike drove two bullets through the windshield into the driver's chest. Two men came running down the stairs. One was Fran's brother.

Mike called to them, telling them to halt. They replied by shooting. Mike dropped the first one with one shot.

then told the kid to surrender. The kid fired twice at Mike, hitting him in the chest. Mike dropped to the pavement, but managed to raise himself up on one elbow. He shot at the retreating kid, who tottered for a minute and then fell in the street.

I arrived shortly after the ambulance got there. The young interne shook his head when I asked him what Mike's chances were. "There's internal hemorrhages and he's lost too much blood."

Fran was there, crying as she bent over Mike. Mike looked at her, then at me, and smiled.

He spoke, "I'm still a sentimentalist, Bill. What was that you said one night, 'I couldn't love you so much, if I didn't love my honor more?' Can't you see, Fran? It was my job and I had to do it."

He didn't say any more after that.



Well Done, My Son

By HERBERT KENNY, '39

FREE—free again. Free from those mechanical meals, those pugnacious guards, those disagreeable customs, that terrible wearisome confinement. Out of that dreary prison where he had been buried alive, and almost forgotten, for the last three years. Three horrid years; better, much better than a life's sentence, but yet, long enough to start one thinking. Out of the "big house"—and away from it; away from that hard prison life that only an ex-convict can curse—and sometimes appreciate.

The span of years goes quickly at times, he reflected, even though during the last three years he would have vowed that time was stagnant; now it seemed, it was only yesterday that he was singing in the rural church choir. I wonder what the old folks are doing back in Steubenville now; if they are still living. How he longed to return and see his dear mother once more. She would never know what had become of her son, not from him anyways. When he had been sentenced to Leavenworth, he had ceased writing to her; he, the source of her pride and joy, the one whom she had hoped would some day ascend the altar of God, an ex-convict; he just couldn't bear to think of it.

In spite of his efforts to think of something else, Joe Brown, who for the past three years and until two days ago had been Number 1166, couldn't. His thoughts kept wander-

ing back to that little town, his birthplace; how quiet it really was and how he could appreciate its country atmosphere now. Too quiet for him in his younger days—no action, no excitement, no life, and that's what a late 'teen boy yearns for; no action, no apparent progress, no one getting wealthy in Steubenville—oh, there was only one thing he could do and that was go to New York. Contrary to the pleadings of his mother and the admonitions of his father, he left, although he promised faithfully to correspond with his mother.

Business was good here in New York, and friends were easy to make. A pal he met in a theatre introduced him to his boss, whom he described to be "a great guy." Joe met him. This man, Seer Fay, promised him the chance to make money, easily and in huge sums.

Well did he remember the man's conversation: "Son if you want to be a success in this world you have to do two things; first, come to New York, and second, work for the right man; and the only right man in New York is myself. I can assure you that you will have steady work and much money. Money that you can send to your mother—you have a mother living, haven't you? Most lads that come from the country usually do. Be kind to her. She may have old-fashioned ideas, but she is still your mother, and she will appreciate and perhaps need the money. What is your answer, Joe? Coming in with us or not?"

Joe filled with youthful enthusiasm, and eager to recompense his mother for his absence, cried, "I'll be only too glad to, sir, if you will give me the chance." The man agreed and Joe had a job.

The money was certainly easily made, although, at the time he didn't realize that it wasn't honestly made.

Well Done, My Son

Joe realized now how gullible he had been to believe this hypocritical fiend; a man who took advantage of his strong devotion to his mother and led him on with suggested benefits.

Brown was a clever boy and it wasn't long before he was Seer Fay's body guard, secretary, chauffeur, and valet. He had long since discovered that Fay's activities were illegal, and that the police were eagerly trying to link his name with the disposal of great quantities of opium. Thus far they had been unsuccessful.

Oftentimes when not busy with Fay, Joe had experienced the pangs of loneliness. Two weeks before the fatal night he had married; married the sweetest girl in New York. In New York? Why she was the best girl in the world.

And then the night came when Joe was caught, stopped while making a delivery; sufficient evidence was found in the car to convict him. He was sentenced to three years in the penitentiary.

During those three terrible years his wife, alone, had remained faithful. Seer Fay deserted him while in prison. Not wishing to cause his mother any worry or shame, he had ceased to write to her; for all she knew, he had passed into annihilation. In his many pensive moods "up there," he had changed his philosophy of life, and determined that the only path was the honest one, and that was the road he meant to travel upon his release.

The warden, an aged man, who had taken a real fatherly interest in Joe and had cautioned him how best to avoid trouble while in prison, was very helpful to Joe on his departure. He warned Joe to avoid his former friends, their headquarters and especially Seer Fay, who was still active, and unapprehended.

Scratching his white head, the warden had continued: "Joe, you are now at the crossroads. One step in the wrong direction will mean a repetition, a continuance of your past life—another jail sentence. A move in the right direction will just be the first in a series of steps which will lead to your ultimate success. You need friends now, Joe, good friends. You have one in your devoted wife, and a firm one in me. You owe it to your faithful wife to tread the golden way; do just that and you will never betray the trust, the faith—the hope I have in you."

And with these sagacious words still humming in his ears, a few dollars in his pocket, and a letter of introduction to a firm where he might find a position, Joe thanked the charitable warden and left.

And now here he was, free again, reunited with Ethel, and working at honest employment. The salary wasn't large now, but the future seemed to hold a brighter aspect. There was a chance to get ahead, here in this broker's office. A position that would mean more than merely being in charge, for Seer Fay had been just that, but a position where he would be able to help others.

Days passed and Joe established himself firmly in the office. Many, many times he thought of his mother; perhaps his father had died and she was alone, really alone, with no one to care for her. Often he was tempted to write and let her know that he was still living and loving her. Finally his resistance became so weak that he spoke to his wife concerning the feasibility of writing.

"Ethel, what do you think I should do about my mother?"

"Joe, I have been waiting a long time for you to ask such a question. You must write. Let her know, at least, that

Well Done, My Son

you are well. And if, by any chance, she should be alone, have her come and live with us. Please Joe, hurry and write.”

Joe did just that; in a few days he received an answer—a tear-stained letter—tears, no doubt, of happiness occasioned by the good news that her son still lived. He learned of his father’s death and his mother’s solitude. Joe quickly made arrangements for her trip to New York, her new home; she arrived, safely—an old but happy mother.

Months passed, and the little family was very happy, but one day the inevitable occurred—Joe’s meeting with Seer Fay. Fay greeted Joe very vociferously:

“Joe Brown, my old friend. Where have you been? I waited to hear from you when you were released, but not a word. What’s wrong? Aren’t you going to rejoin my troops again? I’ll give you back your old position with a large increase in pay. To be honest with you, Joe, Jeff Davis, who took your place, was killed last night. I need a clever aide now, and you’ll fill the bill. You were always alert when it was a question of deciding. Get back in the big money. We have new quarters now, but here’s the address. You’ll have no difficulty gaining entrance—I’ll see to that. Good-bye.”

Body tense and eyes flashing, Joe interrupted:

“Fay, I don’t intend to rejoin your gang. Since I left prison, I’ve gone straight, and that’s just what I plan to keep on doing. Please don’t bother to speak to me again because I’ll ignore you.”

He left hurriedly.

That night Joe told Ethel of his meeting with Seer Fay, and of his threat to compel Joe to rejoin his gang. At first she became frightened and begged Joe to forsake his position and leave New York. Joe, however, was reluctant to do this, for he felt that this job was his hope, and he wasn’t

going to withdraw from it, no matter what Fay proposed to do. Tired and worried, the two, husband and wife, went to bed.

The next evening, Fay awaited impatiently for Joe's coming; Joe, however, had no intention of meeting Fay, but held a petty family council, composed of three members, his wife, his mother, and himself.

Speaking slowly and solemnly, Joe began:

"Mother, you have been very kind and charitable. Since you have come to live with Ethel and me, you have been most helpful——"

"But, son, I only——"

"Yes, mother, you have done much more for me, and for Ethel, too, more than I can ever hope to repay. When I left home, seven years ago, I promised to write to you, faithfully; and so I did, for a time. Then a lapse of three years came; I neglected to write to you, not because I had forgotten you, for I thought of you often, but because I was ashamed; ashamed, certainly not of you, but of what I had been doing and where I was. There I realized that I should never have left home, and, thank God, that when my term was over, my life would be a better one; my past actions and behavior would serve only as a spur to keep me on the right path—the one you had placed me on, years ago. I would try to be a semblance of the man you always thought me to be. A short time before I was sentenced, I married Ethel, and in a way, she has been like you are, my mother. When all others deserted me, Ethel was by my side, inspiring me, encouraging me, helping me. So there in my prison cell, I determined to live a life of honesty and righteousness; it couldn't be anything else. I owed it to you and Ethel. You know the rest of the story,

Well Done, My Son

mother—of my position and our happy life here, just the three of us.”

Joe's mother lifted her eyes. They gleamed with an unrestrained happiness. A slight blush came into her cheeks as her loving heart beat faster.

Joe continued a little more at ease.

“Yesterday, I met Seer Fay; he thinks I'll tell the police all about his activities and connections. He thinks I want to get revenge for his deserting me while on trial and in prison. As his former secretary, I could relate many crimes he committed. I have no intention of doing this; I want nothing to do with him or his gang. I never want to see him again; but Seer Fay is an unscrupulous man, and will have his way, regardless. If I don't go back with him, I die, Lord only knows how and when; if I go back I live in fear; I exist in a living Hell. So, mother, now you can realize the seriousness of this affair, how and why my life is in peril. Do you know how I could remain living as an honest citizen?”

The mother thought a while; then knelt down, the others joining her, and asked God to give her light to propose something possible—something to save her boy—the one whom she thought would some day be a servant of God, thus the mother prayed, silently.

“He's good now, Lord. Please keep him that way. Ethel needs him and I need him. Please, God, let him continue to be an honest man; I'll be satisfied even though I wanted him to be a priest—a priest—a priest.”

The word “priest” seemed to linger. “A priest”—maybe that was the solution; maybe he could help them. Immediately a plan was born within her, whereby Joe's life would be safe forever from the thrusts of Seer Fay.

Rising from her knees, she quickly unfolded her design to the others, and they agreed that it would certainly be worth the trial; more than that it would be a success—it must be—for it was a heavenly inspiration.

It was late that night when Joe went to bed, but his work was almost complete; sixty-three typewritten sheets served as evidence that he had not lingered.

Early the next morning, long before his usual rising time, Joe left the house; he rode to the other side of the city, called at a certain house, explained the nature of his visit, deposited the papers which he had so thoroughly compiled the previous evening, and left—in a joyous mood. He hoped that his mother's plan would be successful, and somehow he felt that it would.

Throughout the entire day Joe wondered; wondered when and what Seer Fay would do when they met.

He had not long to wait. Early that evening, just after Joe had stretched himself in the comfortable club chair—there came a loud thump on the door.

Rising slowly and placing his yellow-bowl pipe on the stand, he indicated that he would answer it. Then, looking at Ethel and his mother, he remarked:

“I would rather talk to him alone, Ethel, not that there is anything to conceal.”

“Certainly, Joe,” Ethel interrupted, and, taking the arm of her mother-in-law, they left the room.

The second series of knocks caused Joe to step quickly to the door. He opened it—and there was, as he expected, Seer Fay.

“Come in, Fay. I've been expecting you; in fact, I'm really happy to see you.”

Fay grunted and smirked:

Well Done, My Son

“Yes? Well, maybe you won’t be so anxious to see me the next time—if there is a next time. Joe, I waited until after midnight for you last night. Where were you? You know nobody with any brains keeps Seer Fay waiting. But we had a big question to settle last night. There was only one possible conclusion, and it wouldn’t take a smart fellow like you very long to find it. You didn’t come last night as I told you. Do you want to keep on living, enjoying life, as my first aide, or—or do you want to die? Speak up fast. What is it?”

Fay dropped into a seat and waited for Joe to speak.

Clenching his hands and drawing himself to his full height, Joe, serious of face, solemnly said:

“Fay, you needn’t sit down, for you won’t have long to wait for your answer. My reply to you two days ago was final. I haven’t the least intention of returning to your gang. That’s my answer—so you needn’t stay any longer.”

Fay was surprised to receive this answer, for he had felt very confident that Joe would decide otherwise.

Displaying all the savagery in him, Seer Fay mocked:

“So you want to be killed—die like a rat, and soon. Well, I’ll attend to it personally. I’ll do my best to oblige you.”

This was the opportunity Joe had been anxiously awaiting.

“Yes, maybe I will die, but my death will also be yours.”

“Don’t be foolish. Your death will guarantee my safety.”

“You’ve asked me several times why I didn’t show up last night. Now I’ll tell you. Last night I recorded every crime in which I knew you had been active. Whenever possible, I made a detailed report, stating date, transactions, per-

sons involved, men responsible, and results accomplished. If the law needs any more information, after my death, concerning you, they can question you. When I had finished my work I had over sixty typewritten sheets and your name was mentioned not a few times. You needn't bother glancing around the room, or even searching the house. That vital convicting evidence is not here. Before dawn this morning I left those papers with a priest and made arrangements to communicate with him every week. If, however, I should disappear, or be found dead, under doubtful circumstances, he is to turn these incriminating documents over to the police. Your name being mentioned there so often, they will immediately apprehend you, and—is it necessary for me to go any further?"

Seer Fay didn't seem to hear the query. He went slowly to the door, opened it, closed it, and walked out into the night.



Papist Propaganda

By WILLIAM H. HONNEN, JR., '41

PROPAGANDA has assumed an important role in our twentieth century existence—not only an important role but a menacing one. Although it is by no means a modern literary device, this gargantuan offspring of the Press, because of its extensive use by innumerable groups and individuals, it has become a prime channel for conveying information and spreading doctrines, both true and false.

Since it is so flagrantly exploited to attain unjust ends, propaganda has acquired a distasteful significance among rightminded people. We have only to glance about the contemporary world to observe the contemptuous way in which social, political, and economic bodies abuse this potent medium. Why is it that this system of propagation should receive such unfair treatment at the hands of unscrupulous groups who seek to sway the masses toward the left, when the inherent principle of all propaganda is to convince people of righteousness? It is time that more of us awoke to the realization of the insult which this pseudo-propaganda hurls at our intelligence. Bridle a licentious press; stalmate obnoxious propaganda.

The art of printing has numerous offsprings—books, magazines, periodicals, and the like—but the most effective medium of exchange with the world and its people is the

daily and weekly journal as well as the small but mighty pamphlet. What a tremendous influence the latter two have upon the proletarian population! For the great class of wage-earners the newspaper serves a twofold purpose—to convey information and to sway the mind by playing upon the heartstrings of emotion. Journalism is an honorable profession and should be kept as such, but too often the clink of silver speaks louder than the voice of conscience, and consequently the unsuspecting public receives biased or false opinions from supposedly authentic sources. A great responsibility rests upon those who edit the news. It is they who formulate public opinion and they are the ones who should be held accountable if opinion is misled. What a catastrophe, then, if the one who guides the destiny of such a vastly influential organ as the Press, happens to be unscrupulous and void of human understanding. If we are to have a worthwhile Press, we must have one that functions in the people's interests, not the owners' or the politicians'. We want only the news that is fit to print. Comparatively few men and women ever scan the editorial page of the daily newspaper, for it is an intellectual accomplishment beyond the average man's interests. It is questionable, however, whether those who wittingly or through ignorance neglect the editorials, are not choosing the wiser path? For it is from the editorial pages that we receive the opinions of others, which opinions tend to formulate our own. And very often it would be better not to read at all than to read some of the abominable misrepresentations foisted upon us. We should be more wary of editors' views than of the sensational news story itself, for although we may escape the purulence of the latter there is no assurance that we will escape the treacherous influence of the former. I am attempting neither to condemn nor condone our present sys-

Papist Propaganda

tem of journalism; all that I desire to see is an ever growing Press, free from biased and unwholesome sentiment.

It has been said that "the pen is mightier than the sword". Similarly the Press is a greater medium of propaganda than any figurative sword which might be raised against it. The newspaper has an enormous sphere of influence as has been pointed out—the pamphlet has an equal force but often effects more drastic results. People in a democracy such as ours would scoff at anyone who advocated the stifling of what we proudly call our Free Press—but there are those among us who seek to undermine governmental and social order through destruction of the Press. And the way in which they accomplish this is primarily by pamphleteering—because this inexpensive system is deceptive. Thus it is that we should strive to keep the good, improve the mediocre and cast out the evil or bad in the Press as in any other art.

Let us leave the atmosphere of the inkpots for a time and observe some of the other media for propaganda in order that we may compare them with the Press. The lecture hall provides a popular haven for loquacious propagandists of a high order who usually have their particular entourage, while the radical on the soapbox also commands a host of listeners. How peculiar it is, though, to find that the man on the street with his coarse haranguing often wields as much influence as the polished orator on the public platform or the learned professor in the college classroom. The difference lies with the mentality of the individual audiences. The legitimate theatre is also an effective source for constructive propaganda. The moral of a play is either good or bad. A specific example of what some people term constructive propaganda are the current Broadway productions, written and enacted by members of the various labor guilds in New York City. The

cinema and radio are two other media of propaganda which tend to influence the immature mind as well as the mature. These two American pastimes are having a vast influence among the youth of today—the future men and women of the nation—and have such enormous possibilities for good or evil that they might be the subject of a thesis in themselves.

Although a majority of the public may be gullible enough to believe some of the printed matter, it would be too much to expect the majority to be fooled all the time. So it is that, although the lecture hall, the theatre, and the radio all have their own particular propaganda value, no one of them alone can compete with the Press. Having scanned the different secular channels for distributing information and doctrine, from a non-partisan viewpoint, it is fitting to mention something of the insidious forces outside the pale of Christianity which constantly gnaw at the vitals of the Church, the home, and the civil government; and indirectly at the inherent rights of all men: their life, their liberty, and their pursuit of happiness. It is necessary to observe the methods of these anti-Catholic and anti-Christian propagandists, not only to compare the effects of good and evil, but to strike a direct contrast between the destructive work of the “Devil’s Press” and the counteracting policies of “Papist Propaganda”. People will not complain about a thing until they feel that someone is using it to take advantage of them. The citizens of the United States ignored the foreign “isms” which were creeping secretly into their midst, until they saw their own sons and daughters linking themselves with the opponents of democracy.

Although these foreign anarchistic elements have a small following among the educated, they usually reap their greatest harvest by preying upon the uneducated, the op-

Papist Propaganda

pressed, and the youth of the country. It may seem contradictory to say that the Press has a greater influence upon the ignorant than it has upon the intelligentsia, for it seems reasonable that a person must have some education to understand even the ranting of a nefarious press. Such a minor difficulty does not phase our flag waving "friends", however. They adapt the Press to their own ends by the use of terse, pithy slogans, and hypocritical posters to deceive their prospective adherents.

This is the Press we fear—the one which prints the lie and succors the liar. There are many specific instances of organizations which propagate untruth. Each has a different motive for its action, but all indirectly undermine the home, the church, and the civil government. It would be a lengthy procedure to list all the forces working against moral and social justice, but I will set down a few examples in order to demonstrate exactly what is meant by the "Devils Press".

There has been a constant stream of filthy sex literature flooding the country for a long time. It is not only offensive to the Catholic population but to all decent-minded people. One of the lowest types of propaganda, it is printed merely for the monetary remuneration realized. There is a direct slander hurled at civilization by printing such moral turpitude. It has been tolerated in the past, but now Virtue is setting her torch to the pyre of printed vice through the action of the Catholic Press which has been carrying on a widespread war against this threat to society, and especially to its youth. The protagonists of Communism have also found the guns of the Papist Press trained upon the strongest bulwarks which they possess, in a united effort with the rest of Democracy to crush this most serious threat to our government. Once again it is righteous propaganda championing truth and justice.

Among the pronounced atheists in the United States, Judge Rutherford and his group of fanatical delinquents are very outspoken and offensive, not only to Catholicity, but to all religious denominations. His use of the pamphlet to spread damning doctrines is a sad example of the forces of propaganda working against the Church and society and a good argument for a strong Catholic Press.

These above-mentioned forces which flagrantly abuse propaganda to achieve their odious ends must be openly condemned. We cannot and will not pamper or placate a corrupt press. Only one course of action remains; to fight and pray that these unfortunates will pass: "Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem". (Out of the shadows and symbols into the truth.)

When we speak of Papist Propaganda we speak of the Catholic Press; and when we speak of the Catholic Press we speak of the official organ of all Catholic action. Our Press is a living thing. Its aims are stated very pointedly by the Reverend Hugh F. Blunt, L.L. D., in his address delivered at the Boston Public Library, October eighteenth, nineteen thirty-seven, during the Catholic Book Week celebration. "If Catholic ideals are true, if they are to be kept and defended and cherished, there is need of a Catholic literature that will not only protect our standards against the onslaught of our enemies—but also—and this is more important—help to increase the life of grace in our own souls, and even amuse us and give recreation to our minds in lieu of the fiction and snappy magazines and much of the other light reading of today which is so nauseous that it seems satanic in its intent." The sentiments expressed by this cleric should be those possessed by the entire Catholic laity. Our Press is not only an organ to refute anti-Catholic doctrine; it is an active exponent

Papist Propaganda

in placing Catholic truth and literature before the eyes of the people—particularly our Catholic people. Because Catholic theology is expressed in an authoritative note—which we understand through the gift of Faith—our literature will express different ideals than those of the world about us. Therefore we should be very jealous of this deposit of Faith and very generous in contributing our talents toward the success of the Press.

We cannot speak of Catholic Propaganda as having a beginning and an end. It is a contemporary instrument which rises and falls with the fortunes of Catholicism throughout the world. One can find the Papist Press in almost every Christian country, with the exception of those which have recently become atheistic. In many instances the copy is printed under adverse circumstances. Inadequate facilities and persecution do not make the lot of the Catholic Press abroad an easy one. This situation does not exist in all countries, however, for we often find Catholic Daily and Weekly Journals giving the secular newspaper very stiff competition. We in America are fortunate in having a completely unrestricted Catholic Press.

Since the end of the nineteenth century the Hierarchy in the United States in conjunction with their subordinates have taken an immense interest in the Press as a medium of Catholic Action. Before this time independent Catholic Newspapers suffered from poor management and wretched financial support. Today we find that a great many Dioceses have established splendid Journals, which are the pride and joy of their Bishops and people. They are modern mechanized units, run under capable management and boasting marvelous circulations. And all this radical improvement because the clergy and the laity became conscious of the great

accomplishments which could be realized through a united Catholic Press. One means of securing this unity was through the foundation of a Catholic Associated News Service—The National Catholic Welfare Conference—which is the official organ for all national and international news dispatches that have any connection with the Faith or activities pertaining to the Church. The Church can stand a great deal of worthwhile publicizing. Each year new progress is made in improving our Catholic writings in prose, poetry, periodicals, and magazines. From the old system of editing the news through the parochial chronicler, our Diocesan papers are ever advancing in the direction of the true purveyor of the news. Since nineteen twenty-eight the Catholic Press Association has sponsored an annual fund for Catholic writers. When the Church takes such an interest in her budding authors, there should certainly be a plethora of response and enthusiasm from the recipients. Last year marked the hundredth anniversary of the German-American Catholic Press. This is noteworthy because of the fact that Catholic periodicals could be found in America one hundred years ago. Let us be thankful for the evergrowing interest in the Catholic Press. We need such an organization to champion Catholicism. When outside propaganda is hurled at us, we then have an equally effective medium of defense. And just as some kinds of propaganda are used to scatter the seeds of discord, our Catholic Press can be applied to the work of nurturing the Word of Truth. The warning of Pope Pius the Tenth cannot pass unheeded—“In vain do you build schools and churches, if at the same time you do not build up good Catholic literature”.

Outside the Press itself we find many other forms of Catholic literature. By this we mean not merely dogmatic,

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ascetic, and spiritual treatises, but also magazines, novels, periodicals, pamphlets, histories, essays, digests, dramas, poetry—almost every conceivable type of writing flows from the pens of Catholic authors today. Each form serves its own specific end, but no matter what the end may be, Catholic people can rest assured that they are receiving true philosophy in all Catholic literary works. It is sad to relate that sometimes our own brethern, with their false pride and university education, have sneered at the Catholic Press, because, while it did good to countless souls, it did not reach the heights of the cultured intelligentsia. Bear in mind, however, that the idea of the Catholic Press is to reach all minds, educated and uneducated, to instruct them, to help them lead better lives, and even to amuse them. I say this in no apologetic tone, for the Catholic Press, same as the Church, needs no apologies. We have writers among the clergy and laity who can compete with the best. But to be sincere they must remain unsophisticated.

For the past decade we have heard much about Catholic Action. But how many know just what this action is or what obligation it entails? Catholic Action is nothing more than a slogan for the renewed participation in Catholic interests by the laity, which has been in a passive state for too long a time. As a literateur or a subscriber, all of us can demonstrate our Catholic spirit. Then, too, prayer is always acceptable for the success of an enterprise; prayer coupled with monetary aid is that much more acceptable when one is able to give.

The primary reason why we should support our Press, however, is the fact that we need the Catholic environment in the home. It keeps the Catholic and his family supplied with first-hand information concerning his Faith; it enlightens

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him spiritually, guides him morally, and tends always to inspire him and his in the way of Light and Truth.

Propaganda has always been a powerful organ in spreading doctrine. If the printing press were in use during the time of the Apostles they would certainly have printed a newspaper, because they, as the broadminded pilots of the present-day Church, would have realized the enormous sphere of influence that sincere propaganda covers. We find St. John propagating Christ's doctrine before the public life of the Redeemer. We find the Apostles and their successors carrying on the traditions of Holy Mother Church since the Resurrection. During the middle ages it was the Monks who perpetuated Catholicism by transcribing tradition into written words. Today we find the Catholic Press playing an important role in conjunction with the Church, that of propagating the Faith.

Our Press is an integral link in a symmetrical chain that helps to bind souls to God. It is the duty of Catholics to see that this chain is kept in good repair. Every chain is as strong as its weakest link. We want no deficient links in our fetters. So let us strengthen the Press temporally by good works and spiritually by prayer so that we can feel assured that we have fulfilled the letter as well as the spirit of Papist Propaganda.



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