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INDO-CHINA : CATHOLIC AND COMMUNIST

By SHEILA O'LOUGHLIN

[Reports from Indo-China tell of very intensive efforts made by the Communists there to lure Catholics to their side. A copy of their Party paper captured recently gives instructions as to the steps to be taken. It points out that it is most necessary to have members drawn from the Catholics, because of the strength of the Church in the country. It admits that they completely failed in the past.]

ALTHOUGH the present Irish direct contribution to the conversion of Indo-China is proportionately small, consisting as it does of an Apostolic Regent, four Sisters in the Order of St. Paul of Chartres, and the introduction there of the Legion of Mary, our sympathy goes out instinctively to this most Catholic country in Asia, which has suffered so much for the Faith. To-day the Catholic Church there faces Communism, and it is interesting to trace the steps by which Indo-China has arrived at this position.

The total area of Indo-China is about twice that of France, while the population is about 24,000,000. The population of the Eastern part of the country—Vietnam—is virtually Chinese, but that of the Western part—the constitutional monarchies of Laos and Cambodia—is Hindu by culture and Indonesian by race. Vietnam comprises the states of Tonkin, Annam and Cochin-China. On the appeasement of Vietnam, France intends that the Indo-Chinese Federation will form an integral part of the French system. Tonkin and Cochin-China are the most progressive of the states, being the rich rice-growing districts in the south of Mekong delta. Indo-China is said to be rich in resources of strategic materials such as rubber, zinc and tin.

France acquired this dominion piece-meal in the latter half of the 19th century. French missionaries worked for two centuries in Annam before the reigning Emperor began to accuse them of political aims against his country, and, by initiating against them a persecution of exceptional violence, provoked the fate he had feared. In 1858 the French bombarded Touraine near his capital of Hué and occupied Cochin-China far to the south. In 1863 French protection was invoked by the King of Cambodia

who was attacked in the north by the Chinese and in the south by the Siamese. In 1883 Tonkin, the most disorderly of the Annamite countries, was conquered by the French, who, however, refused to do any more than help the Emperor of Annam to police the area until they discovered that the Emperor, to offset French power, was actively encouraging banditry. The French then occupied Tonkin, thus completing their occupation of the whole coastal area. In 1893 fearing an English advance through Burma, the French bombarded Bangkok, annexed the eastern provinces of Siam and occupied Laos up to the Burmese frontier.

In her comparatively short dominion in Indo-China, France has many achievements to her credit. The Chinese pirates who infested the Gulf of Tonkin have, thanks to the French Navy, long become merely a memory; the waterways which drain the vast marshlands of Cochin-China represent a greater effort than Lesseps' great canal at Suez; the huge dykes at Tonkin overcame difficulties rivalling the much publicized difficulties of the Mississippi and the Po, while in the educational sphere the scholarship of the École Francaise d'Extrême Orient is known all over the world. Even during the present conflict the French administration in Indo-China, far from passively awaiting the outcome, has instituted a plan for the industrial equipment of the country. This plan includes the setting up of new industries; the construction of new electric and hydro-electric power stations and the strengthening of the stability of the country by a new orientation of its economic policy. This modernization of Indo-China is being carried on despite the fact that the mass of French investment in Indo-China, between 1885 and 1940, has never yielded more than 1.52% per annum.

But while France has shown good intentions in her dealings with Indo-China she has, by her policy of short-term administrators, failed to keep in touch with the feelings and aspirations of the people. During the greater part of French rule Indo-China has had, on an average, one Governor-General per year. In the early years of her rule France introduced reforms too fast, such as the dispensing with ceremonial prostration, and the replacement of capital punishment with the life sentence, which, in Indo-China, was thought infinitely worse than death, as it separated one too long from one's ancestors. In modern times France's lack of understanding of the strength of the Nationalist Movement, and her delay in ratifying a treaty with the

ex-Emperor Bao-Dai, destroyed the faith of the Nationalists in the good intentions of France, and sent many of them over to the Communist movement.

The national revolutionary movement in Annam had been in existence for some time before it received the means and energy to seek independence in the chaotic conditions which followed the surrender of the Japanese in 1946. The aim of this movement was the achievement of territorial integrity within the framework of the French Union. If this could have been granted in time the Communists would not have had the opportunity of representing their dictatorship as the only alternative to foreign domination; even with that tactical advantage the Communists never won the sympathy of the mass of the people, and their present position is due to their technique of skilfully and ruthlessly seizing power from a numerically stronger but less well-organized opposition.

The Communist chapter in the history of Vietnam really began with Ho-Chi-Min. Exiled from Indo-China in the early 1920's he sought asylum in France and was sent by that country to Russia as a delegate to the International Peasant Congress in 1923. After two years' indoctrination in Moscow he went to the Russian Consulate in Canton, ostensibly as a translator, but actually to organize from there a communist movement inside Indo-China. He started by forming the "Young Annamite Revolutionary Party" among Annamite exiles, and two years later the first trained organizers were introduced into Indo-China. In 1930 the party, now known as the "Indo-Chinese Communist Party", set up its first headquarters on Indo-Chinese soil, but following serious riots the French banned the party the following year. Although the central committee, including Ho-Chi-Min, fled, Communist activities were continued under-ground, and recruits were sent to Russia each year for indoctrination. In 1942 Ho-Chi-Min founded the "League for the Independence of Annam"—the same party, but a new name. Later the Chinese succeeded in amalgamating into one party all the remaining revolutionary parties which had received Chinese help.

When the Japanese surrendered in 1946 there was a race between these two parties to take over power from the puppet Japanese-sponsored régime before the French, who had been interned since March of that year, could regain control of the country. The Communists won by a short head, partly because of the adherence

of Ho-Chi-Min, partly because of their superior organization, and partly because of the collusion of the Japanese. Nevertheless, skilful manœuvring was required to deal, not only with a disordered country, but also a Chinese army of 200,000 men which backed the Communists' rivals. But the Communist Party overcame such obstacles and preserved its aim of an independent Annamite Government, run on Communist lines, while paying lip-service to democracy by formally dissolving the Communist Party and reappearing under the new name " Viet-Minh ".

The French, who now recognized the need to come to terms with Annamite nationalism, wished to form an Indo-Chinese federation, comprising Viet-Nam, Cochin-China, Cambodia and Laos, the whole to remain inside the French Union. A conference was held at Delat to discuss the matter. The position of Cochin-China, the rich granary on which the North has depended for food and financial assistance, was the major problem. Cochin-China disliked equally the French and its more industrious and able neighbours to the North, while its large middle-class feared Communism. In July, 1946, however, Ho-Chi-Min headed a Vietnam delegation to Paris and, after further discussions, a preliminary agreement was signed pending a new conference to draw up a final agreement.

A Vietnam Government was formed in August, 1946, with Ho-Chi-Min as its President. As it was desirable to create the façade of a national front, the new Government included the Chinese-sponsored party, but, due to the weakness of the opposition leaders, " Viet-Minh " retained all the power while seeming to make big concessions. They then proceeded on the usual lines to gain control over the Press, the police, the Security Forces, and, finally, set up their own " Ogpu ". While Ho-Chi-Min was still in France his party took complete control of the Government, liquidating the nationalist element. The " People's Party " disappeared and was replaced by a subservient party of the same name to procure the illusion of a national front. The ranks of the " Viet-Minh " were now purged of the moderate elements, chiefly the educated and the wealthy or land-owning classes. Finally, power was seized by the central committee of five members who were known by name, but remained in the background, retaining Ho-Chi-Min as a figure-head.

Relations between France and Vietnam steadily worsened. Various incidents occurred, and finally, on December 10th, the Communists

made their bid for power by attacking the French garrison in the town of Hanoi and various other places in North Indo-China. The Vietnamese considered that, even if they did not win their campaign, they would eventually wear down the French and gain complete independence if they adopted a scorched-earth policy and prolonged a grenade war. Fighting in Indo-China has continued since then.

In the meantime, however, negotiations have continued between the French Government and a new Vietnamese Government established at Hanoi under the protection of the French Government. (Owing to the disturbed state of the country it is not possible to ascertain the measure of popular support this Government has.) In June, 1948, General Xuan—head of the Hanoi Government—with the approval of Bao-Dai, now Chief of State, signed a provisional agreement granting Vietnam independence within the framework of the French Union. The agreement left important questions in the financial, economic, military and diplomatic fields to be settled, but provided a basis for further negotiations. Both Bao-Dai and General Xuan desire to achieve Dominion status for their country. France is ready to grant this if it can be made consistent with her idea of a member of the French Union. The idea of a Dominion on the British lines is not, however, really understood in France.

The war in Indo-China is extremely unpopular in France. At a time of economic crisis this war is costing France about 10 per cent. of her total budget. Even worse, it is a constant drain on French blood. Some time ago it was stated that there were about 173,000 Frenchmen in the French formations, while another 20,000 stiffened the resistance of the associated Vietnamese Army. The French feel that Indo-China and Korea are merely different fronts in the same struggle which should be the concern of all free nations, whether the front is in Europe, Korea or Indo-China. America is already sending economic aid and arms to Indo-China, but General Xuan complained that the arms were not coming according to schedule and that arms might not be enough. Mr. Eden's statement on the matter at Columbia University was taken to mean that the British and American Governments would go to war with China if the Chinese intervened in the Indo-Chinese conflict, even under the guise of volunteers. It is believed that France was promised that if the Chinese invade Indo-China—which the French think likely, if a truce is concluded in Korea, in view of the number of Chinese troops already massed on the Indo-

Chinese border—Britain and America will give France full support in the air and on the sea.

But for the Communist war, which not only hinders the progress of the Catholic Church but threatens to submerge it, it is believed that the Church would now be making incalculable strides in Indo-China. The people are gentle and friendly. No non-Catholic religion has a strong hold there, and Buddhism seems to be an ancient and enfeebled tradition. The Catholics number about 2,000,000, and are acknowledged to be the strongest minority in the country. Although in the present Vietnam (Hanoi) Government there are two Catholic Ministers and two Catholic Secretaries, while two out of the three regional Governors and the wife of Bao-Dai are Catholics, nevertheless Catholics do not wield as much influence in public life as they should. This is partly due to the past associations of the Catholic missions with the French colonial and military authorities, and partly to the fact that public officials are generally drawn from the former mandarin highly-educated classes. The Catholics are poorly equipped as regards educational facilities. As far as primary education is concerned, they are better off than their neighbours, as the native Sisters and Catechists in villages conduct many small schools. There are no Catholic secondary schools, however, in ten out of the fifteen Vicariates (eight out of the fifteen have no Catholic hospitals or dispensaries) and there is no Catholic university in the country. There are no Catholic newspapers or reviews to interest the better-educated classes and only a few small monthly magazines.

Since the introduction of Catholicism into Indo-China by the Jesuits in the early part of the seventeenth century the people have suffered much for their faith. The number of martyrs in three former persecutions is estimated at 100,000. Most of these were killed in the nineteenth century, and their grandchildren and great-grandchildren are among the staunchest of Indo-Chinese Catholics to-day. The Catholics are well provided with churches which are always crowded for Masses on Sundays, and often on week-days. A great number of Catholic boys and girls become priests and nuns. In the fifteen Vicariates of Vietnam there are six native bishops, while native priests total around 1,500—about four times the number of foreign priests. There are about 2,000 native Sisters. The Church in Indo-China is in a healthy condition, and whatever the future may hold in store for the Catholics, they will, like their ancestors, accept death rather than renounce their faith.

MESSAGE OF LOURDES AND FATIMA

By the late C. J. WOOLLEN

"YOU must admit," said the Seventh Day Adventist, "that the world is in so sorry a state that it needs a new revelation."

"I admit nothing of the kind," said his Catholic friend. "The faith once delivered to the saints", as the inspired St. Jude the Apostle expresses it in his Epistle, was good enough for him, and, as Our Lord Himself reminds us, people have always been slow to heed the prophets. If the Divine Teacher Himself is so little regarded, what new messenger of His is likely to gain credence?

Nevertheless, the thoughts of this Catholic went to Lourdes and Fatima. But he was aware that these manifestations are no new revelation, but are witnesses to the Revelation of Our Lord Jesus Christ, given into the keeping of His Church. And it is one of the marks of any true revelation that it witnesses to the teaching of Christ and His Church, and contradicts it in no way whatever. To test its genuineness other marks are needed also, because, in these latter times, false prophets "shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive (if possible) even the elect". (St. Matt. xxiv, 24.)

"Revelations" that contradict revealed truth, whether sponsored by specific heretical bodies or not, are palpably false. We need no new revelation, but, by the goodness of God, we have been granted spectacular reminders, by way of Lourdes and Fatima, of the necessity of holding fast to the Faith, God's revelation to man made over nineteen hundred years ago, the content of which has been taught by His Church through the years ever since.

The messages of Lourdes and Fatima are fundamentally identical. "I am the Immaculate Conception," Our Lady said to Bernadette, not to advertise or glorify herself, but to give honour to her Son, who, through His merits, had prepared her in unique fashion to become His first dwelling-place on earth. She pointed to Him as the one hope of a civilization fast falling away from His service. She stressed the need of prayer, and, as a proof of its efficacy, has, by her intercession, secured a series of miracles at her shrine.

But perhaps the greatest miracle of Lourdes is that it has itself become a vast power-house of prayer. Prayers are multitudinous,

but miracles of healing comparatively few; lack of them by no means indicates that prayer is unanswered. No doubt the spiritual are more important than the physical: miracles of grace, of soul healing and consolation; reconciliations and conversions to God. Not the least graces obtained are doubtless those gained for others, and not directly for the sufferer who makes the pilgrimage. Many have to forego their own cure that sinners may be brought to repentance. "You will pray to God for sinners," Our Lady said to Bernadette; and she called for repentance.

What is all this but the practical application of the teaching of Christ? Prayer and penance, He stressed so often, are essentials of all Christian living. Mary teaches nothing new; she merely drives home the Christian lesson to a world sadly out of tune with the Redeemer. Lourdes has become a representation of Christ's power, for all the world to gaze on, reverence and profit by.

At Fatima Our Lady called again for prayer and penance. The child Lucy, now Sister Mary of the Immaculate Heart, the only survivor of the three who saw Our Lady there, has insisted that "the conversion of sinners, and the return of souls to God" was the chief point of Our Lady's message. Voluntary sacrifices and Communions of Reparation were asked for. The recitation of the Rosary was required in particular, because that unique prayer combines for most Catholics prayer and meditation on divine truths. The Christian must not only pray, but must think on the fact and means of his redemption. It is through the merits of Christ that he has received all graces of soul and body, and he must know and love Him to whom he owes everything. The well-instructed Catholic learns early that knowledge precedes love. Knowledge of God comes in great part through thinking much on the truths of Revelation. It issues in love when this is done prayerfully. Service of God follows by a life in which penance has a prominent place, for otherwise the Catholic cannot live in union with Christ, who suffered throughout His own life the anticipatory agony that culminated in the supreme sacrifice for men of His Passion and Death on the Cross.

But prayer and penance! Both are so contrary to modern theory and practice that to those who have never before considered their value, the idea that they have any place in the plan of life must come as a new revelation indeed. To an age given over to every

form of noisy distraction for relieving the boredom of living, the quiet restfulness of prayer must seem profoundly silly. To a generation that is progressively licentious, glorying in orgies of indulgence, penance is nothing but outmoded lunacy. Even on the lower plane of pleasure-hunting, barriers against sin are readily removed, as exemplified in the lack of restraint so often shown in dance-hall and entertainment centre; the incitement to sin brazenly expressed in film shows and many of the modern fashions.

There is a whole modern philosophy of pleasure and worldliness allied to the materialism which inspires it. The name of it is Marxism, of which Karl Marx is, for his dupes, the prophet. To them he has given what many think is a new revelation: the doctrine that there is nothing beyond this life; no immortal soul; the exhortation that, for the satisfaction of the senses, every ounce of material gain must be squeezed out of living while there is yet time.

How different from the words of Our Lady to Bernadette at Lourdes: "I do not promise to make you happy in this world, but in the other." And it is discouragement and disillusion to the devotees of the materialist cult that they do not find in it what they seek; pleasures pall, and soullessness reacts to dull even intellectual delights. Nevertheless, those who disseminate Marxism are ever finding willing pupils; and the hatred of God, which is of the essence of their creed, leads them to a destructive activity which serves them, for a time, as an outlet for the energies which every man possesses, to be used for good or evil.

Those who have made a religion of materialism have thereby rejected God. "I will not serve," they say, while their masters cunningly persuade them that they "shall be as gods". The refusal to serve God is accompanied by a planned attempt to usurp His Providence. The Marxist thinks to have the secret of world domination by organizing industry down to the smallest detail, and by a system of economics which is fundamentally immoral because it is based on the denial to citizens of the personal freedom which is the birthright of every one of them.

In opposing the Marxist menace, communities claiming to be anti-Communist have not avoided making universally destructive weapons. Men cannot control the forces of nature, but they have found a way of harnessing them, for good purposes it is true, but

also for bad. It is difficult to view the atom bomb as a Christian weapon; it is surely diabolical in conception as a weapon.

We have to deplore its manufacture and use in any cause, however professedly good. We have, too, to view with distress the growth of economic planning on the Marxist pattern in other lands than those which base their economy on Marxism. We are faced with the fact that, even when the Marxist solution for the economic evils of capitalism is officially rejected, the alternatives applied have often too much in them of bureaucratic advantage and too little regard for personal rights. They are totalitarian rather than Christian; and they are inspired by a longing for collective material aggrandizement rather than by the good will that comes from the desire that God should be served.

We find ourselves, to our dismay, forced to form part of a society which makes a kind of compromise with evil things. The Church, wherever it fights, fights alone, for although she may have the support of many people of good will outside her, they are rarely forthright enough to declare themselves on her side; nor are they organized to do so. Too many of her own children, moreover, hesitate between the service of God and service of the world. What wonder is it that God has, in these times, sent urgent messages to them by Our Lady that they may shake off their worldliness and return to Him in time?

It is significant that the apparitions of Lourdes began soon after the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception had been solemnly defined. The Fatima apparitions have taken place not long, as time goes, before the Church's solemn definition of the doctrine that Mary was assumed into heaven.

It was through Mary that Christ came into the world. His first coming was through Mary physically. In His second coming she will play a part spiritually. It is she who, by her intercession—yes, and by her apparitions and warnings—will prepare the souls of men to be judged by Christ. That time may be soon; it may be as yet far ahead. What is certain is that, for every man, it comes at the moment of his death.

The pretended new revelation of Marxism aims only at the destruction of souls. The call to prayer and penance, the practical expression of the Christian life, contained in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, is made anew by Our Lady, that the evil campaign of soul destruction may be universally frustrated.

CO-OPERATIVE SWEDEN TO-DAY—II

By DANIEL DUFFY, D.D.

IT may be the Celtic temperament, or it may be the *reliquiæ* of long oppression (as I am inclined to think), but Irishmen in general are not conspicuously good at co-operative business. In face of a recent challenge to co-operative effort on a bold and original plan, the response was a full chorus of dissenting voices. There are, to be sure, isolated exceptions, and the genius of a Paddy the Cope will be cited. Creamery successes will be quoted and there is no gainsaying their achievements. But the boast of bigger figures and better services is not sufficient unless it is backed by a real growth in social consciousness and an improved standard of living. It is fair to ask whether our co-operative societies, as a whole, have followed the true co-operative pattern and have built around themselves an alert and satisfied community such as their founders envisaged. The English and Scottish co-operative movements have an impressive record of commercial success, but it seems to end there. Co-operative leaders and planners do not go there on pilgrimage as they go to the Scandinavian countries. The latter area has assumed a world-wide leadership and is constantly pioneering new developments in the co-operative design of living. Their record makes one institute comparisons, not in any carping mood, but with a sincere desire to learn and, if possible, to imitate. The present essay is based on a recent work: *Co-operative Sweden To-day*, by J. W. Ames, S.Sc.D., published by the Co-operative Union, Limited, Manchester. The principal difficulty is to make a choice of items from an abundant and fully documented source.

I

Consumer Co-operatives.

There are two main sections in the Swedish co-operative movement, the Consumers' Movement, with its central organization, Kooperativa Forbundet (usually called KF), and the Agricultural Co-operative Movement. Each of these is independent, and, indeed, to some extent in opposition, as they serve the conflicting interests of consumer and producer. But they have an agreed basis for negotiation. The consumer movement, it may be said at once, has no parallel in this country. For that reason we shall be content to

animadvert briefly on its scope and efficiency and pass on to a more relevant topic, the Swedish rural scene.

At the end of 1950 the number of retail societies affiliated to Kooperativa Forbundet was 681, with a total membership of 962,341. As family membership is typical of the Consumers' Movement, it is reckoned that these figures represent 2,618,924 persons, or 37.4 per cent. of the 1950 population. An analysis of the membership shows that the great bulk of registered members are industrial and other urban workers amounting to approximately 86 per cent. of the total. The decline in rural membership is due partly to the growth of the independent agricultural movement and partly to the annual decline in the number of farmers and farm workers. The movement does somewhere between 20 and 25 per cent. of the total retail trade of the country as far as foodstuffs are concerned and somewhat more than 15 per cent. of the trade of the country in all branches of trade.

There is nothing revolutionary in the following extracts; they rather serve to underline the orthodox and scientific quality of Swedish co-operation.

> The traditional principle of the Swedish Co-operative Movement that credit trading should not be countenanced guides Swedish co-operative opinion to-day just as it did in the past. Practically the whole of the Movement's business is now conducted on a strictly cash basis. . . . (p. 38).
>
> Within the Swedish Movement there exists no equivalent of the British Co-operative Movement's " mutuality system ", nor is there to be found any form of hire purchase or similar means of deferred payment. The Swedish Movement's reply to the extensive credit facilities offered by the private trade takes the form of " loan guarantee funds " (p. 38).
>
> This Congress calls upon the Union's Administrative Council and Board of Directors to make a closer study of the forms of industrial organization which could be adopted by the Movement in its collaboration with the rest of Swedish industry and which at the same time would preserve the fundamental principle of the right of the consumer to a share in the management and surplus (p. 101).

The financial structure of the movement is designed to ensure maximum independence and maximum power of expansion. Members' shares, reserves, and so-called " mortgage bonds " provide most of the capital needs of the societies. The question whether to

pay more dividends or increase reserves, familiar to all co-operatives, is a permanent subject for discussion among Swedish co-operators " with those in favour of maintaining the present system of allocation holding the advantage ".

Although there is some falling-off in attendance at society meetings and, for whatever reason, the rising generation are not as appreciative of co-operative action as they might, still the Consumers' Movement is vigorous and expanding, and is, indeed, taken for granted as a normal and highly respected element in Sweden's economic life.

II

The Agricultural Co-operative Movement.

An over-all picture of Swedish agriculture must strike the observer in two ways: the resemblance to Ireland in average size of holding, and, by way of contrast, the compact organization of the whole agricultural economy. Of the 420,000 farms to be found in Sweden, no less than 320,000 are under 25 acres and 120,000 are under 5 acres. (In the Twenty-six Counties there are 380,000 holdings; 90,000 are under 5 acres, 210,000 are between 5 and 50 acres, 80,000 are over 50 acres.)

> For some years now the " ineffective farm " has been receiving the attention of the Swedish Government, and in an effort to find a solution to the problem an agricultural committee was set up to study the position and make recommendations to the government.
>
> The chief concern of both the agricultural committee and the government was that any solution to the problem of the " ineffective farm " should not have the effect of changing the existing structure of the Swedish agricultural community to the detriment of the small farmer. . . . What was really being sought was a system of cultivation for the small farm which would preserve and, if possible, strengthen the small farmer class (p. 120).

The second point is the organization of agriculture, which is local, representative, and, what is specially noteworthy in these days, singularly free from bureaucratic interference. The importance and effectiveness of the Agricultural Co-operative Movement in Sweden may be inferred from the following figures: it handles 97.8 per cent. of all milk production, over 72 per cent. of all animals for slaughter, 65 per cent. of eggs and a large percentage of the timber and firewood trades.

The Swedish Farmers' Purchasing Association, which got into its stride only in the 1930's, is responsible for supplying 50 per cent. of the farmers' needs for such things as fertilizers, imported cattle feed, seeds, building materials, liquid fuels, machinery and implements. The Association takes over a large proportion of the farmers' crops in the autumn and the grain is conveyed to the Association's specially designed grain elevators and store houses. This makes it possible to regulate the market and so ensure a uniform price level.

The Agricultural Movement is organized on democratic lines and its meetings are conducted on the basis of " one member one vote ", irrespective of size of farm or number of shares. In accordance with sound co-operative principles, any surplus arising out of the business activities of such a society is paid to members not on the basis of their paid-up share capital, but in proportion to the amount of business they conduct with their society.

Only farmers who agree to deal exclusively with a society can obtain membership.

The central organization, the Federation of Swedish Farmers' Associations, represents not only co-operative interests, but in many respects the interests of Swedish agriculture as a whole. It conducts negotiations concerning trade and prices with the State and other interests within the community, and, in addition, represents Swedish agriculture when international agreements are being negotiated. It produces estimates for the annual agricultural price calculations to be presented to the government. It also serves the farmer by means of research and the organization of an information service.

Co-operative agricultural credit activity in Sweden is divided between two organizations—the General Mortgage Bank of Sweden and Swedish Farmers' Bank-Credit Association. (The bulk of the capital is provided by the share contributions of its members.) " The General Mortgage Bank is concerned with the issue of mortgages which it makes available to its members up to 60 per cent. of the value of their property. The Swedish Farmers' Bank-Credit Association deals with the supply of short-term credit and the more ordinary banking business, that is, loans, bills of exchange, cheques, and similar services. Not only the farmers, but also agricultural societies in general conduct their business through this organization " (p. 143).

III

Swedish Agriculture—What Makes It Hum?

The curious thing about Sweden's farmers is that they seem to have awakened suddenly some time in the middle thirties. Their progress since then, according to Mr. Ames, is the outstanding development in the whole Swedish economy. When Marquis Childs first published his *Sweden, the Middle Way*, in 1936, he left the Swedish farmer out of the picture altogether. He was not a success, he was no model for the social-democratic cause which Mr. Childs was espousing. A change came with the agricultural crisis of the thirties. The farmers' co-operatives, already long established, began to function in a more purposive and business-like way. They were influenced, doubtless, by the conspicuous success of the consumer movement, and they got substantial State support. Farmers began more and more to take the marketing of their produce and the organization of the supply of farming requisites into their own hands. " The Swedish agricultural co-operative movement to-day consists of a complete system of associations which start with the farmer in his local marketing or supply society " (p. 105).

The essential thing, one gathers, is that each association, and therefore each organized farmer, is dealing with a specific product. (A farmer may belong to several distinct societies.) It begins, in a logical way, with a concrete programme for the farmer's concrete needs. The farmer has a vital, wide-awake interest in his society; it is not just a study-club, on the one hand, nor a " closed shop ", however skilfully managed, on the other. As well as being more logical, it seems a more effective way of maintaining membership than, say, the more general appeal of an organization like Muintir na Tire or Macra na Feirme. Farmers are willing to be organized, but they must be convinced that the organization has a practicable programme which touches each man's particular haggard. It is the function of the central body to direct the economic and educational activities of the separate associations *according to their separate interests*. That is the policy and practice of the Federation of Swedish Farmers' Associations.

In his general summing-up of the co-operative movement in Sweden, Mr. Ames attributes its success largely to efficient centralization. At least that is his opinion of the consumer movement. The same seems to be true of agriculture which is no longer a patchwork of isolated

zones and overlapping services, but an integrated economy, presided over by a representative body of the farmers' own choosing.

One gathers also that Sweden has been extremely fortunate in her choice of social leaders—if, indeed, it is good fortune and not a sound cultural tradition which has brought them to the task of leadership. In his section on co-operative education, Mr. Ames, strangely enough, has nothing to say of the rural folk-school which has been for more than half a century the mainspring of Danish prosperity. It is true some of its features are embodied in the system he describes. But his account seems to emphasize the farmers' interest in technical education, both in college and by correspondence course. (Over 40,000 were enrolled in the latter in 1950; 13,700 individuals and 27,000 in study groups.) In recent years, he tells us, instruction in farm management is being supplemented by courses in business management, book-keeping and general farm-economy.

The development of the Irish co-operative movement did not favour the provision of an educational service comparable to the one we have just noticed. It is possible that a change of policy in that regard might help to cure the present unsatisfactory state of education for agriculture. Broadly speaking, the "supply and demand" for this type of education is much better among the Swedes. They seem to *give* what is wanted, the farmers seem *eager to receive it.* It is a moot question which comes first, the supply or the demand? Undoubtedly, the one stimulates the other. It would seem from the extraordinary expansion of the Young Farmers' Club movement in Ireland in the past few years that there is a widespread and earnest "demand". It would also seem from many regional reports that the demand is not being adequately catered for, that the "supply" is sporadic and haphazard. The consequences could be serious; it could lead to disillusionment and despair, at least for this generation. It is bad psychology, and bad economics, to whet an appetite and fail to satisfy it. Perhaps the example of Sweden might prove helpful.

THE BOY FOR BOYS ?

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

By FRANCIS MacMANUS

MUSEUMS are temples of ancestor-worship with all the relics crammed in and the votive altars left out. They demand reverential whispering and tiptoe walking as if the rumours of our world might disturb the sleep of the dead. Yet, the house in Edinburgh where Robert Louis Stevenson was born is lived in and cosily domestic. One feels an intruder as one enters the suburban hallway from the suburban street that seems slightly dingy after the east-windy, west-endey determinedly classical grandeur of the city. The living and the dead exist on different floors, different levels. In the hallway, Victorian in its solidity, one might be the visiting gas-man or the electrician or the insurance-man, calling about some business or other, important for the moment with the trivial importance of mundane life; the shilling entrance-fee might be change from a bill; the American tourist at one's heels, so knowledgeable and eager, might be a visitor in search of comfortable bed-and-board for the Festival; but once one has mounted the stone stairway, feeling a little the chill of the stone treads, and has entered the rooms on the first-floor where the display cases stand and the pictures and framed documents are hanging on the walls, one is in the shrine of the house where the ancestor was born. Edinburgh is gone, and with it the insignificant bridge over the unremarkable Water of Leith and the rattling and swaying tram-cars, and one is in the bosom of a family and a circle of intimate and worshipful friends, all dead but yet present, whispering, perpetually waking the distinguished writer, plucking at one's elbow with an anecdote about days in Auld Reekie or Davos or Samoa.

The range of the relics is astounding as though from the time he was born he was watched over, like some saint in a fabulous piece of hagiography, by his nurses, friends and relations, as a prodigy to whom great things would happen and by whom great things would be done. Even his discarded and battered toys appear to have been preserved; and from a half-open drawer the head of a limp doll protrudes. Guns are here that he used in Samoa, sea-shells from the

Pacific islands he visited, and artefacts by the natives among whom he lived so happily and whom he loved so well. There was diligence in the making of the collection, and behind it was the enthusiasm of a Stevenson society, priests of the temple and of the cult that erected statues—there is a fine one by Saint-Gaudens in Saint Giles—that affixed plaques to walls and marked the course of his life in Scotland. Is the doting diligence purely personal? Is it not also the result of a small country's effort to express its identity through honour to a distinguished native? Few more powerful writers in other countries, less of an accident as it were in the development of a tradition, have received such worship as Stevenson, and afterwards such an obscuration in fame.

Nothing in our time approached the worship of this writer in degree or even in kind, except the worship that was given Shaw before the end. But one could not be so pious, so sickeningly pietist about Shaw as many Stevensonians were about Stevenson for a period. They took him not only as the fine craftsman he was, but as the finest of artists; and they made him out to be what he wasn't, a religious teacher, a prophet in romantic exile in the South Seas. They produced lavishly illustrated books about his life and career so that, amused, one could not help wondering if he had not been observed jealously by spying proud eyes since his boyhood. They made sermons out of his struggle with his illness of which, as one biographer tartly remarks, he did not die but of overwork. They extracted sentences and passages from his writings and turned them into Thoughts for Every Day of the Year, mottoes for calendars and diaries and almanacs, until the congenitally gay man who had rebelled so early against the Calvinism of his country seemed as if he had really been a scion of the house of Knox, a mere moralizer, a staid puritan oddly disguised as a jolly fellow. Excessive reverence and importunate intimacy coloured the relationship of the devotees with his memory, and there was nothing that might not be a relic, no word that might not be treasured, as though they were Arabs and every scrap of his writing were one of the mysterious names of God. Stevenson himself can't be wholly absolved from complicity in fostering the intimacy and the reverence. In that wilful fosterage begins one of the main problems of a biographer intent on getting to the truth of the man.

He fostered the intimacy and the reverence in the scores of letters

he wrote so well, so entertainingly, vividly and descriptively, especially about his life in Samoa. He knew that the letters had a literary value. *Vailima Letters, Letters to His Family and Friends,* as well as other collections, went through numerous editions after his death; but they, most of them, that is to say, were not letters written with two eyes raptly fixed on the friends. They lacked some of the innocence of full friendship and the secrecy. One eye was on publishers and posterity; and a man who is writing for posterity and publishers is less likely to reveal all of himself. He is more likely to write about the figure he cuts on the landscape of his own mind—and Stevenson does cut the figure of the modestly heroic, hard-working, gay and yet serious figure who became an object of worship. Something of the pose, not necessarily objectionable because it is a pose, may be detected in the Saint-Gaudens statue of him. The public legend is in the dramatic lines of it, and Stevenson, for all the worship, was at once much more and much less than the public legend revealed to a circle of intimate friends! It is in the worship itself, rather than in the carping of those later critics who disliked him and his work and saw him in disproportion, that one discovers how much less he was; and it is in the denigration of his critics that one discovers how much more. For instance, Sidney Colvin declared that there never was a time in his life when Stevenson had to say, "Behold! my childhood is dead, but I am alive." And Colvin adds, worshipfully, that the child lived on in him always, and that there was a perennial boy in him. It was the boy for boys who wrote *Treasure Island*!

It is plain that the concept of "perennial boy", or of "the boy for boys" was for Colvin and so many other Stevensonians, a mark of high virtue. Was it, in fact, anything of the sort? Would an Athenian of the high days of Greece, or a Florentine of Dante's republic, or an Elizabethan of Shakespeare's London, have considered it an important virtue in a man to be thought boyish? As Gertrude Stein might have said, a man is a man; and the peak of manhood is that maturity and full manliness which can appreciate the childlike and the boyish without being childish or boyish. In point of fact, it was not a boy but a man who wrote *Treasure Island*—only the romantic try to evade the fact. It was wrong criticism and wrong-hearted biography to read back from the existence of *Treasure Island* and to conclude that because the book was so agreeable to boys, it

was the boy in Stevenson who wrote it. One might as well read back from the existence of a baby and assert that it was a baby gave birth to it. It was no boy who conceived that wonderful story, gave it its vivid and consistent coloration and worked out the flawless style. To say otherwise is to confuse the delight of creation with the delight of appreciation. It is to confuse reading and writing.

And was it true in any case that the man could never say with Saint Augustine that his childhood was dead? Was he a freak that survived as perennial boy the trials and terrors of lifelong illness, disappointments, considerable travel, indiscretions, and some contact with fallen human nature? To judge Stevenson in the light of that concept of Colvin's is to place oneself in the unhappy position of shirking the evidence. The evidence of his youth is there of the problems solved and unsolved and of the deep changes in belief that mark the death of childhood and the development of the man. He was only twenty-two or three when he had that profound trouble with his father about religious belief which upset him and hurt him and made life miserable for a young man who enjoyed life with zest. That zest had become too strong and ardent in him to be caught and disciplined by the Calvinism of his father and forefathers, and by the time serious questions came to be asked, he was, for Calvinism, beyond redemption. And he was conscious of it as no child can be. He was aware of the elements of tension, opposition, dispute and disaffection. The elements were, on the one side, his warm family affection, his reverence for his father and his deep love for his mother; and on the other side, there was this steely sense of personal integrity which, had it been allied with a satisfying and adequate spirituality, might have turned him into a saint, but sufficed in the end to make of him one of the most conscientious of literary craftsmen. "The thunderbolt has fallen with a vengeance now," he wrote in one pathetic letter. "On Friday night . . . my father put me one or two questions as to beliefs, which I candidly answered. I really hate all lying so much now—that I could not so much as hesitate at the time; but if I had foreseen the real hell of everything since, I think I should have lied, as I have done so often before. I so far thought of my father, but I had forgotten my mother. And now! They are both ill, both silent, both as down in the mouth as if—I can find no simile. You may fancy how happy it is for me." And later he accused himself of damning the happiness of the only two people

who cared a damn about him. The child, the boy, was dying there. And he did not escape from Calvinism into Colvinism.

For his unfortunate parents he may have been, for a time, the *enfant terrible*; but he did not remain all his life that obnoxious creature, the Terrible Teenager. He grew, groping as any thinking boy must grope, towards certitudes, and if he appeared to settle for a morality that was agnostic in its basis and individualistic in its tenets, it was not evidence of surrender. He never lost his optimism, though he did come in contact with the evil and the corrupt in many forms, and did try to investigate the heart of evil in his writings. But somewhere in his youth, in his childhood, perhaps (who knows?) in his infancy in the house in which I tiptoed among the relics, his mind was given that simple black-and-white coloration, that primitive knowledge of good and evil, which he never lost; and forever he would look on men and women with a regard that tended to be uncomplicated. Good men would be good, and bad bad. There would be the heroic, and there would be the villainous, so evil as to be almost diabolical. In a generous, nobly written outburst he would famously defend Father Damien—though later, on long reflection, he would have doubts as to whether he had been quite just to the man who had provoked the outburst. That moral simplicity, so useful for melodrama and political propaganda, would make his friend, Henry James, the subtle old investigator of human complexity, become gingerly tactful and canny in his letters of appreciation to Stevenson. But what, one may ask, of Jekyll and Hyde, that same person compounded of evil and good? To that one may retort, chemical hocus-pocus was needed before the bad man emerged from the good, and there were two persons rather than a split nature. The world, the flesh and the devil were good enough for other writers as "chemical" reagents, and indeed they were good enough for Stevenson, who had the equipment to become one of the greatest of writers, if only he had ceased to react from the Calvinism of his youth. All his life he challenged the sorry world, the sick flesh and the skilful devil with his optimism. That was the "whiteness" of his morality. "But," writes a notable kinsman of his, Mr. Graham Greene, "human nature is not black and white, but black and grey." Stevenson would have said, "No, it is not. It's white and grey." And it is he, the ex-Calvinist who, one feels, is nearer the heart of the matter. That was his soundness and his nobility.

AN IRISHMAN LOOKS AT BRUSSELS

By JOHN J. DUNNE

BEFORE I went to Brussels, I had been looking forward to finding a fair-sized, and fairly lively, continental city . . . as lively, that is, as one might expect the capital of a small country to be. I thought I might even find a " little Paris "—as Brussels has been called so often. But I had a few surprises coming. . . .

The first surprise came before my train pulled into the *Gare du Nord* on a rather dark and dismal Sunday evening. We had been rushing forward through the darkness, silent under that feeling of half-elation and half-uneasiness which one feels when approaching a strange city for the first time in darkness. Then gradually the darkness was broken by a few scattered lights hurling past our carriage windows—rapidly the lights increased in number, became scores, hundreds, thousands, it seemed; we were in a world of light, all sorts of lights, from countless ribbons of brilliant street-lamps to mazes of flashing, jumping, squirming neon-signs that leaped and danced in a score of shades and colours against the night sky.

This was no " little Paris ". If anything, it was, in many ways, far more " Parisian " than Paris itself. The railway stations of Brussels set the tone of the whole city. Worthy as ports of entry to any capital, I, at least, have seen their equal only in the solid marble railway stations one finds throughout Italy, which, I understand, are a legacy of the Mussolini régime there. But the main stations of Brussels, the North, the Central, and the Congress, make the *Saint Lazare* of Paris look provincial, and, I am sorry to have to confess, I felt somewhat ashamed when I thought of our own railway termini at home.

From my hotel on the *Place Rogier* I wandered far on that first evening in Belgium's capital. The brilliantly-lit boulevards were crowded with a gay, laughing, jostling throng such as one is told to expect in Paris, but which one seldom encounters there. The streets and the people gave the impression that here was a city that remained awake and vibrant far into the night.

Whenever I visit a strange country town at home in Ireland, I invariably arrive on the day after the circus has paid its annual visit, or find that I have to leave a day before it is due to arrive. But

in Brussels my luck, for once, was in. The circus had come to town in the shape of Centenary Celebrations. I admit that I am still not certain just what centenary it was, but a long narrow thoroughfare called the Brabantstraat was *en fête* in truly continental tradition. Every shop in it was ablaze with light. Illuminated garlands criss-crossed the street every few yards, and were surmounted by massive crowns formed by hundreds of electric bulbs. Dazed by the glare of this scene straight out of fairyland, I wondered vaguely who paid the electricity bill.

Every shop along the Brabantstraat was open and doing good business, notwithstanding that the hour was late and that it was a Sunday evening. Stalls of all sizes and shapes had been erected along the sidewalks and the crowds were pressing around them eagerly. Dart-games and games of chance were in full swing on every hand. Balloons bobbed about over our heads. A band in harlequin costume forced a way along the centre of the road. The noise was incredible. I have heard nothing like it except in a Glasgow bar on a Saturday night.

But even without Centenary Celebrations, or any other excuse for turning on every available electric bulb, I found Brussels a city of stimulating movement and life, both by day and by night. It is a city of theatres, cafés, cabarets, and cinemas, and when darkness falls, the *Place Rogier* and the *Boulevard Max* become brighter than they are at midday.

Strolling the *Boul' Max*, or rambling along the gracious *Avenue des Jardin Botanique* in the morning sunshine, the visiting tourist is struck by the number of large American cars on the street; sleek and modern, these strike a somewhat incongruous note as they sweep past the lumbering, single-deck trams that supply the city with a first-rate transport service.

Brussels must be proud of its many gigantic department stores, of which the *Bon Marche* on the *Place Rogier* is perhaps the most impressive. Belgium, secure with a large dollar credit, knew little of post-war shortages, and to-day its shops are laden with goods. These goods, however, are expensive, and the cost of living seems to be high. In fact, the only things that would be likely to strike the visiting Irishman as bargains are tobacco and cigarettes. A good brand of Belgian cigarette sells at, roughly, one and sixpence for a package of twenty-five.

I found modern entertainment surprisingly cheap in Brussels. The prices of admission to theatres and cinemas are lower than those we are accustomed to in Ireland. Two and sixpence will secure you a luxury seat in any of the big cinemas—and another factor which appealed to me was the fact that I did not have to queue. However, I would have enjoyed a cigarette during the performances, but in all the cinemas and theatres it is strictly *defense de fumer*.

If your time is limited, as mine usually is, the best way to see any strange city is to take a conducted tour. In this way, you will see most things of interest, for which you would waste precious time searching should you set out on your own. Those places which appeal to you most may be revisited later for a more detailed study. I followed this plan in Brussels—after I had learned that, geographically, the city covers an area equal to that of Paris.

That was how we came to find ourselves in a miniature ten-seater bus in the company of six members of the American air force on leave from Frankfurt, and a Belgian guide who spoke fluent English with a faultless American accent! In this way, we saw most of Brussels' places of interest, and discovered as we went that, as well as being a modern city, it is also a place of enchanting old-world beauty.

One might imagine oneself back in medieval times as one crosses the ancient cobblestones towards the *Hotel de Ville* and gazes upwards at its perfect Gothic tracery; an illusion enhanced by the number of old guild-houses that stand around this small square that must be one of the most perfectly preserved in all Europe—standing to-day like a page torn from Hans Andersen or the Brothers Grimm. Personally, as I stood there, I could quite easily have imagined myself in the Brussels of the Spanish governors—that is, if it hadn't been for the battery of cine-cameras which my GI friends were levelling at the *Hotel de Ville*, determined to bring back with them something of medieval Europe to Detroit, Jacksonville and Cuyahoga Falls.

I am afraid that I spent the rest of that morning in Brussels in a very orthodox tourist manner. Our bus took us, with that dogged determination of all such tourist buses, to the Palace of Justice which dominates Brussels from the top of its high hill, and from which we could see across the city to the bulk of the Church of Sacre Cœur, the building of which was started in 1904, but which stands still unfinished to-day, silent witness to the dislocating capacity of two world wars. Soon I added another Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

to my collection, and then we glided away, GI's, cine-cameras and all, to the Centennaire, the really beautiful Church of Saint Michael, and the Church (although it is usually erroneously called Cathedral) of Saint Gudule, where the toll of war is also apparent in the loss of irreplaceable stained glass.

But when I remember Brussels now—and I remember it very often—and when I shall think of it in the future, I do, and shall, remember it best for the little cameos I snatched from its busy life, in the less-trodden byways, far off the track of my tourist bus.

For instance, I shall always remember the old lace-makers in their shadowy little shop in a back street. Little old ladies, their lined faces like masks of parchment, bending intently over the intricacies of their work—practitioners of an ancient and honoured craft that has miraculously survived in this unsentimental machine age of ours to-day. Out of all that bustling city of Brussels, that tiny shop of the lace-makers remains clearest in my mind, and I think of peaceful, kindly old faces surrounded by the objects of beauty that their nimble fingers have created.

Busy fingers and cobweb patterns of lace . . . an ancient dog-cart jolting along a cobbled street . . . the medieval splendour of shadowy corners where even the dust seems to have lain undisturbed down the years . . . and, around the corner, trundling tram-cars and sleek American limousines . . . and all the glare and blare of the twentieth century—all that is the Brussels I remember.

RELIGION AND CULTURE

" It is the Catholic ideal to order the whole of life towards unity, not by the denial and destruction of the natural human values, but by bringing them into living relation with spiritual truth and spiritual reality."—CHRISTOPHER DAWSON in *Religion and Culture*.

DEMOCRACY AND ELECTIONS—II[1]

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

By DR. A. D. MacDWYER

IN parliamentary representative government the right of a defeated or minority Prime Minister to dissolve Parliament is the " regulator " of the delicate equilibrium between the ministry, the assembly to which it is responsible, and the electorate. Accepting the political facts of human behaviour as they are and the rarity of a popular, electoral majority of the poll, the previous analysis contrasted Proportional Representation and the traditional electoral mode, and showed that only the latter could be confidently relied upon as an effective complement to the " regulator " in providing stable parliamentary government. Contrary to the usual opinions, it does no more than this, as it may require for effectiveness certain optimum conditions. Whilst representation is in part a continuous dynamic interplay of manifold influences between Parliament and electorate, the true facts of the traditional electoral mode as a medium of elective representation meets the fundamentals as noted by Burke and others.

These optimum conditions induce a political party, without losing its individuality, to emphasize its rôle in one aspect of representation, that is, the trusteeship for the whole community. Because of this, the traditional electoral mode gives an effective influence at the electoral level to small minorities, while also affording stable parliamentary government. At the same time it correlates the other function of the parliamentary representative in his relationship to his constituents and in advocating their interests.

There can be no confident hope that a representative, in being responsible to his conscience, will practise virtue and wisdom, unless a community also holds these ideals. However, under the traditional electoral mode, the character of a representative tends to be better known to his constituents. In time, the representative who behaves honourably, and in general looks after his constituents' interests and " nurses " the constituency, becomes less dependent on the central organization of his political party. Consequently, within the councils

[1] See IRISH MONTHLY, April, 1953.

of the party he is less likely to be a cipher and establishes a moderate independence within the party discipline.

On the other hand, under Proportional Representation, the larger the constituency and the more numerous the seats, the less personal is the relationship of the representative to his constituents, and the more dependent on the party machine does he become, so that he is little more than a puppet of the caucus of the organization.

Of course, because of its importance to the orderly conduct of parliamentary government, the disciplined parliamentary party must not be confused with the disciplined, tyrannical party government of the U.S.S.R. The former is a voluntary association to support the proper means, which, through transient shortsightedness, may be temporarily unpopular, subserving a morally lawful agreed end. Its antithesis is the French deputy who believes his own stability to be more important than the stability of a government. For example, while he agrees in principle to a balanced budget and taxation for a corresponding level of public expenditure, he refuses support for the detailed tax! The Government falls and the tax accrues anyhow through inflation, the worst of all forms of taxation.

Proportional Representation was largely devised and praised as a check on a tyrannical majority riding roughshod over small minorities. This fear, which continues to the present, overlooks the fact that the traditional electoral mode gave efficient influence to such minorities. The reason is simple. The fact that a party must aim at a plurality of the poll of 7% to ensure a parliamentary majority is of importance to small groups within a community even if spread homogeneously throughout it, as a party will broaden its policy so as not to antagonize such groups while at the same time not losing its widespread distinctive appeal. This, in part, explains why small minorities are so well treated in countries that have this electoral mode, as they have a reasonable influence at the electoral level without in any way affecting the stability of government at the parliamentary level.

A recent example of this was in the elections to the provincial legislature of British Columbia, in Canada, where Catholics are a minority of 15% of the population and were seeking some aid in maintenance of their private schools (as distinct from State schools). The Liberal Party, who formed the previous Government and was defeated, losing twenty of their twenty-six seats, opposed this claim. The main Opposition, the Conservatives, also refused to support the

claim and were reduced from fourteen to four seats. The Social Credit Party, without previous parliamentary representation, won nineteen. The Catholics who showed great organization electorally are deemed responsible for this great change in party fortunes.

Again, in Great Britain, the comparison of the results of the last three elections shows how a minority, spread homogeneously throughout the electorate, can influence the final overall result. In this case it was the support for the Liberal Party going to a greater degree to the Conservatives than to the Labour Party in the constituencies that it did not contest in the last election (Table II).

TABLE II.

PARTIES.

	Conservative	*Labour*	*Liberal*	*Poll*
1945	40 %	48 %	9 %	77%
1950	43.4%	46 %	9 %	84%
1951	48 %	48.7%	2.5%	83%

While it is noted that a small minority distributed homogeneously throughout a State can influence at the electoral level the pattern of the overall result, it is a recognized fact that a national minority of whatever size that forms compact areas or a region having local majorities obtains all the benefit of the premium of the traditional electoral mode for the localities. An example of this is Ireland within the total electorate of the United Kingdom as it existed before 1922, or Belfast and its surrounding areas within an all-Ireland electorate as in the 1918 election, or the Anti-Partitionist areas within the Six Counties to-day. This tends to lessen the overall premium for the party who receives the largest electoral support nationally, and if the representation of such a minority in Parliament is large enough, it can have an unstable effect on governments in much the same way as Proportional Representation. From this arises the necessity, as previously noted, of recognizing the principle of subsidiary function and establishing governments for such areas within a federal framework so as to remove such matters from the national or federal sphere. It will be seen, therefore, that this electoral mode gives an effective electoral influence to small minorities, without

endangering stability of government, provided they are not disfranchized and there is equality before the law.

In passing, it may be noted that it was the innate political genius of Parnell in recognizing this fact that almost brought a certain degree of autonomy through his tactics in the British Parliament. From the Nationalist representation he fashioned the first disciplined non-governmental party, and from that period originated the disciplined party *system*, which is one of the essential features of British and Irish politics. It is unknown in France.

It will be seen, therefore, that the purpose for which Proportional Representation was invented, the effective political influence of minorities, had indeed existed with the traditional electoral mode. But wherever P.R. is used, it has caused more evil than good. Not only because of human behaviour is a parliamentary majority for one party most difficult to achieve under P.R., but it can be used by very small minorities to prevent the largest group in the community from ever achieving its due representation.[1] It can be used to make coalition governments inevitable with the results that brought Europe to the position it is in to-day. It is the example of a political institution being invented on *a priori* theory, which was invalid, as it was based on incorrect assumptions about the behaviour of an electorate. Based on the heresy of excessive individualism, the inheritors of the twin heresy of Marxist collectivism adapt it to their own purpose of creating conditions of political anarchy. A few years ago Mr. Molotov laid it down as a prerequisite for the unification of Germany. (However, Soviet Russia need not worry about that. The overall pattern of the present German federal electoral mode, which is a mixture of the traditional mode and of P.R., in the first Federal post-war elections, was similar to what has been described for P.R. with constituencies of three or more seats.)

The evils of P.R. were exemplified in a first citizen of a small continental country, recalled by popular referendum, being denied the exercise of the headship of State by planned street riots, before which a government bowed, because its members, inured for almost a generation to the haggling methods of coalition governments, had lost their initiative and will to rule when faced with crises and broke

[1] Ths veto of a minority under P.R. may be compared to the *liberum veto* of the medieval Polish Diet, that eventually led to its destruction, partition, and the loss of Polish freedom.

their electoral pledge that, in 1950, had enabled them to form the first one-party government for twenty-six years. Again, in its nearest neighbour, Holland, in the summer of 1952 a general election, indecisive because of P.R., resulted in the country being without a government for over two months!

However, historians have noted the effect of scale in emphasizing the defects of political machinery. Therefore, it is in the large European countries especially that the faults in the electoral modes have brought the failure of parliamentary institutions, which are not peculiar to any one country, but had their common origin in medieval Christendom.[2] The political stability of French Canada is a strange contrast with France; the citizens of German and Italian stock in the U.S.A. are amongst the bulwarks of representative democracy. To those who suggest that representative democracy cannot flourish with Catholicism one must note the oldest democracies in Europe, the Swiss Catholic German-speaking cantons, the first members of the Swiss Confederation.

It is the electoral mode in association with the Prime Minister's right of dissolution in the stated circumstances which gives that political stability to parliamentary democracy—that various *a priori* post-war constitutional devices have failed to achieve. In making representation an effective complement of stable democratic government *within the moral law* the importance of the electoral mode cannot be minimized.

[2] The oldest representative legislature in these Islands is the Keys of Man. Tradition accords its present form to Godred Croban (in Manx Gaelic, Ri Omy), King of Man and the Isles, whose dominions included Dublin, 1079-1095. The analogy to the Gaelic polity is too close to be a coincidence.

and string quartet, and has six movements. Two of these—Nos. 3 and 5—are minuets, in both of which we get the only slight fault in the recording, a noticeable " wow " on the *forte* chords. The number is Decca LX 3105. On Brunswick AXTL 1009, the *Notturna in D*, K. 239, receives an insensitive performance by the Zimbler Sinfonietta. In a previous review of this group, one could lay the blame on bad acoustics, but here it is obvious that the whole approach is ill-conceived. The *Notturna* is backed by the *Suite in A minor* for flute and strings by Telemann, an older contemporary of Bach, who was a most prolific composer and was regarded in his lifetime as very much the superior of the Leipzig Cantor. There is more than a passing reminder here of Bach's Suite for the same combination, and the Zimbler group is evidently much more at home. The last Mozart offering is of chamber music on Decca LXT 2772. Clifford Curzon and members of the Amadeus Quartet play the Piano Quartets, No. 1 in G minor, K. 478, and No. 2 in E flat, K. 493. The difficult piano writing here is full of interest, but never at the expense of the strings, as is so often the case when Brahms introduces the keyboard into his chamber music. Both works are highly individualized, and there is an anticipation of Beethoven in the terse writing which characterizes the G minor Quartet. The playing is at once refined and most moving, and balance and recording are faultless.

The early *Serenade in D* for violin, viola and 'cello, by Beethoven (Joseph and Lilian Fuchs and Leonard Rose—Decca LX 3103) gives us a glimpse of the young master writing in the conventional 18th century idiom in a light agreeable manner, with little sparks glinting here and there, but without any attempt at taking life too seriously. Turning to the last years of his life and the monumental *Mass in D*, Op. 123, the *Missa Solennis*, we can barely recognize the features of the youth in the suffering-ravaged yet Olympian demeanour here presented to us. It is to Vox that thanks must go for the first recording of the *Missa Solennis* (PL 6992-2, Album 532, four sides). The soloists are Ilona Steingruber, Else Schürhoff, Ernst Majkut and Otto Wiener, with the Viener Akademiechor and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra under Otto Klemperer. Once again this company has secured a really outstanding performance and recording, by means of which the magnificence, the beauty and the spirituality of Beethoven's music are brought to us shining and clear, and

without the slightest distraction. No music-lover anywhere can afford to miss this truly magnificent recording. If Vox can maintain the standard they have set themselves in the first two of their recordings to come my way, they will undoubtedly be responsible for a general raising of technical criteria *vis-à-vis* the gramophone, among critics everywhere. I look forward to observing their progress in the coming months.

On the 9th February, 1812, a fashionable theatre was opened in Pesth with the production of a dramatic masque by Friedrich von Kotzebue, with incidental music by Beethoven. The masque has long since ceased to have any interest, but Beethoven's music, *The Ruins of Athens*, continues to be heard occasionally, especially the overture. Nixa has issued the complete incidental music consisting of the Overture and eight sections on CLP 1158, with Annie Woudt, David Hollestelle, and the Netherlands Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra, under Walter Goehr. The story briefly is of Minerva, bewailing the loss of culture in Athens and Rome, but finding it in Pesth under the beneficent rule of the Austrian Empire, and the work ends with a glorification of the Emperor, *Heil unserm König*. Those sections of the text not employed by Beethoven are omitted from the recording, which is a welcome addition to the catalogue of lesser-known works of the masters. Among these may be reckoned also the majority of Haydn's great mass of quartets. In the Nixa series devoted to their recording we get the *Quartet in D minor*, Op. 42—the only instance of a single quartet comprising any of Haydn's opus numbers—and the one in G, No. 1 of the set of two comprising Op. 77, both played by the Schneider Quartet (HLP 37). A better balance could have been achieved among the players. The first violinist is a trifle too anxious for the spotlight and the 'cellist has precisely the opposite tendency. Apart from this, both performances manage to convey the delicate craftsmanship and the beauty of these works, but above all their humour.

One of the finest musical craftsmen in the Romantic era was Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, and of his music it has been remarked with justice that technique has almost always been in advance of inspiration. The so-called "*Scots*" *Symphony* (Decca LXT 2768) begins in a most promising fashion, but later becomes curiously uneven. The *Symphony No. 3 in A minor*, Op. 56, to give it its full title,

has long stood in need of an adequate recording. The best so far has been a performance recorded in the early thirties by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the late Serge Koussevitzky, but it has long since been deleted, and the science of recording has progressed so rapidly in the last twenty years that it would be no longer acceptable to modern gramophiles. At last, however, we have got a definitive modern recording on this Decca disc by Georg Solti, conducting the London Symphony Orchestra. Apart from somewhat poor string tone at the beginning of side 2, this is excellent, and a special tribute is due to the woodwind, above all in the attractive *Scherzo*, with its Celtic faëry atmosphere. Van Beinum and the Concertgebouw Orchestra give us clear playing as between woodwind and strings in the *Overture*, *Nocturne* and *Scherzo* from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, though there is some unsteadiness of pitch (Decca, LXT 2770). The same fault occurs on the reverse side, which is devoted to the Overture, *Entr'acte in B flat*, and *Ballet Music in G* from *Rosamunde*, by Schubert.

Once upon a time . . .

REMINISCENT SKETCHES—IV

By PAUL FALVURY

WHO WAS HE?

THERE is, or was, a tendency with some persons to associate genius with sanctity (an effigy of Keats, for example, decorates the Anglican church in Hampstead), but there is really no necessary connexion between them. Holiness, though imparting a deep spiritual wisdom to the possessing soul, does not create anything that the world would regard as genius, and the owner of genius by no means necessarily exudes the virtues of the spiritual life. It is

frequently said that pious people are difficult to live with, though if that is so, the piety is presumably somewhat defective; but genuine genius, it seems, is often possessed by an individual who is not only not saintly but is unattractive in character. Probably contemporaries of Ludwig von Beethoven considered him anything but a pleasant companion; rough, irritable (no wonder, poor chap), unreliable, careless, dirty and not always straightforward. Nevertheless, he had his friends and felt strong affection for some of them.

It must have involved quite an effort on the part of delicate von Weber to journey out the twelve miles or so from Vienna to Baden in 1823, when the autumn leaves were strewing the road, but he evidently thought it worth while to do so for the purpose of a chat with his composer friend then staying there, and Beethoven welcomed him with enthusiasm. Taking Weber's thin hand in his powerful grip, he brought him in with, " Hallo, here you are, you little devil!" and enjoyed such conversation as deafness would permit, a seat for the visitor having been improvised by dumping a pile of music from the sofa on to the floor. But the great man's apartments presented the usual sorry spectacle—music folios strewn over the floor, mingled with clothes and coins, broken coffee cups on the table, the grand piano, thick with dust, and displaying the customary broken strings, while Beethoven himself sported a shabby dressing-gown in its last stage of existence. Of course, trappings do not make a man, and the proverbial idea that cleanliness and godliness are close associates must be taken at a discount, but a stranger would hardly have been favourably impressed by the appearance or ways of the great Austrian. Weber took with him one of his pupils, a young man of nineteen who had come to Dresden two or three years previous and was resident at Weber's house and accompanied him on his travels. This youth was later on to make a name for himself in England and to lose money there on a speculative operatic venture. He was also to earn the doubtful reputation of being " one of the worst conductors who ever held a baton . . . buried his head in the score, raised his arms too high, gave cues too late, and lacked any magnetic power ".

Who was he?

(*For answer, see page* 210.)

SOME RECENT BOOKS

MODERN PHILOSOPHY

Recent Thought in Focus. By Donald Nicholl. London: Sheed and Ward. 1952. 16/-.

If a reporter gifted with exceptional acumen and acuteness of hearing were to attend a confused and noisy debate on some important issue and were afterwards to publish a clear statement of the views of each speaker and an analysis of the arguments used, he would, no doubt, render a public service. Such a service has been rendered by the author of this book to those interested in the conflicting ideas usually labelled " modern thought ". The average educated person who has left the university behind and who does a little serious reading in scanty spare time is very likely to come across allusions to Marxism, Existentialism, Psychology, Evolution and possibly also to Phenomenology and Logical Positivism. He might like to know what ideas lie behind these big words, but, if dissatisfied with mere dictionary definition, he would find himself faced with a mass of literature which has gathered round each of the systems labelled as above, and is set forth for the most part in books hard to come by and often harder to understand.

To such inquirers Mr. Nicholl offers his book as a sort of first aid. That, of course, is too off-hand a description of it: the author himself devotes twenty-nine closely printed pages to explain " the Purpose of This Book ". This may be somewhat daunting to the intending reader, but he ought on no account to pass it over or he will miss the point of what is to follow. For, let it be said at once, the author, though a Catholic with a firm grasp of the Faith and of the *philosophia perennis,* does not set out to refute the various systems mentioned above. His purpose is rather to analyse them with a view to discovering such elements of truth as they contain—nay more to find in them, mingled with their errors, fruitful ideas that could lead, and even have led, to valuable results. This is surely a highly commendable enterprise and in the opinion of one reader it has been successfully carried out. S. J. B.

CONFERENCES

The Hidden Stream. A Further Collection of Oxford Conferences. By Mgr. Ronald Knox. London: Burns Oates. 1952. 16/-.

What strikes one about this book, before one has gone very far in reading it, is that it is, and is very perfectly, just what it purports to be, viz., talks to undergraduates about religion—talks rather than formal lectures, for the familiar, oral style prevails throughout, and " to undergraduates ", for it is couched in what, no doubt, is their way of talking, viz., at times on the border line of slang and expressed in terms of their way of thinking. The thinking indeed starts from the level of the undergraduate who may be ill-informed but is certainly not unsophisticated, who, moreover, has listened to arguments about religion from all sorts

of angles and has heard and read, from a Catholic point of view, rather more of the cons than the pros.

Mgr. Knox's qualifications for such conferences are, one need hardly say, quite outstanding. On the one hand he was for many years chaplain to Oxford students and knows them thoroughly, and the intellectual atmosphere of Oxford. On the other he is acutely conscious of the difficulties brought by rationalists against religion and by non-Catholics against the Church. And he states fairly and meets squarely the case for the prosecution. He brings to bear for the defence his almost unrivalled knowledge of Scripture and his close acquaintance with the literature of rationalism and of comparative religion. (Comparative religion, he writes, is an admirable recipe for making people comparatively religious.) Best of all, he has a wonderful gift for bringing out his points by means of brilliant and witty comparisons, which brighten nearly every page.

In this short book of only 220 pages he manages to convey an almost complete course of apologetics—apologetics in *rapid* motion. S. J. B.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

Don Francisco. By Mary Purcell. Dublin: Gill. 1953. 12/6.

The religious biographer is necessarily faced with difficulties added to those of the secular writer. Religious experience does not necessarily make convincing reading and there is the added danger of offending those who seek to emphasize the natural or supernatural qualities of their hero. Biographies will make their tactical assaults on this problem in widely different ways. Miss Purcell approaches her subject with the novelist's craft and eye and gives a study which uses without obtruding the necessary equipment of scholarship. It is attractively and popularly written. She contrives to capture the spirit of Xavier by a careful selection and highlighting of her material and gives an imaginative recreation of his life and the background against which it was lived. The writing is vivid, soaked in the colourful and sordid atmosphere of 16th century, colonizing, empire-building Spain. The backdrop is of a Europe rent as ever with political and religious strife, dominated by powerful and despotic personalities. Among these, kings, adventurers, religious rebels and reformers, Ferdinand and Isabella, Henry VIII, Luther, Calvin and Columbus, Xavier strides as by right. In a world of far-flung conquests his were fraught with no less danger or expense of spirit.

Miss Purcell's pages succeed in conveying something of the fire and secret of this fiery personality who sums up in himself so completely the spirit of his age. Here and there the writing may leave a little to be desired. The long soliloquising of the chaplain in the earlier pages or a conversation such as Xavier's description of Michael Angelo's Last Judgment seem at times slightly artificial or overpainted. But these are only minor flaws in what is a readable and always captivating life.

A word should be said for the production and type in the book which add considerably to the pleasure of reading. D. McK.

CHRISTIAN POETRY

Early English Christian Poetry. Translated into Alliterative Verse by Charles W. Kennedy. Hollis and Carter. 1952. Pp. 292. 21/-.

Such a book as this is indeed welcome at a time when the demands of an ever increasing literature and a growing tendency towards specialized scholarship conspire to dislodge Old English studies from their place of honour in the English schools of the universities. Professor Kennedy's aim has been to translate for the general reader the best of the Christian poetry written between the seventh century and the Norman Conquest. Few, I suppose, who qualify for this title, can read much original work with any ease that dates from the days before Gower and Langland. Anyone, though, who has read even these authors will appreciate to the full the excellence of the new-old alliterative verse by which Professor Kennedy preserves all the atmosphere of these old poems, while investing them with the idiom of our day.

A twenty-page general introduction on Old English Christian poetry, and a foreword to each poem, ensure that even the most unfamiliar reader will feel completely at home amongst these earliest literary expressions of English religious idealism. For the author includes only specifically Christian poetry. It is a pleasure to read these poems. Fresh and vigorous, they are filled with a stimulating wonder and thankfulness before the greatness of God and the beauties of His creation. To our times, when wonder is evoked almost solely by the greatness of man and of his creation, when the creed of so many is synopsized in the blasphemy of Swinburne, come the voices of Cynewulf and Caedmon to give us pause. When we have listened to them, perhaps we understand why the poets of our day have so little to say, and understand perhaps, too, why, in comparison, those who have something of value to communicate fail so often to interpret and to conciliate. These poems are an experience not to be missed. Even to those cut off from union of heart and mind with their authors, they present a coherent and gripping mythology.

All lovers of poetry will welcome Professor Kennedy's translation of what must still remain, after thirteen centuries, one of the most beautiful lyrics in the language: *The Dream of the Rood.* Extracts from the *Christ,* inspired by the liturgical "greater" and "lesser" antiphons of Advent, in their note of contemplative peace and prayerful adoration, present us with a fine testimony to the living faith of those days. Compare them, for instance, with the uneasy heart-searchings of religious poets like Herbert and Vaughan, or with the ecstatic frenzy of Crashaw, in a later more troubled age. Readers of Mr. Waugh's *Helena* will appreciate Cynewulf's *Elene*; and while recognizing how much the English creative imagination has grown in depth and complexity since the eighth century, they can hardly fail to be struck, too, by the radical sameness of its mood and temper. Those who are interested in the problem of the conscious and unconscious influence of tradition on creative artists will find matter for much intriguing comparison and speculation in *Genesis*

and in *Christ and Satan*. Did the author of *Paradise Lost* know these poems? It is not likely, but he may have done. Very fine translations of the Allegories of the *Panther*, the *Whale*, and the *Phœnix*, and of the *Doomsday* poem complete this book, and make it altogether desirable, bringing us back as it does to the clear sources and first beginnings of a great literature. C. McG.

SREATH AISTÍ

Ceo Meala Lá Seaca. Micheál Mac Liammóir. Sáirséal agus Dill. 7/6.

Is spéisiúl leabhar Gaeilge d'fháil ó láimh fir chomh cáiliúl le Micheál Mac Liammóir. Ní hamháin gur suimiúl linn an dearcadh atá aige ar an saol (agus ar an nGaeilge, mar baineann sí sin le saol muintir na hÉireann), ach is suimiúl linn freisin mar a éirigheann leis a smaointe do chur i dtuigsint dúinn tré mheán na Gaeilge. D'éirigh go maith leis san leabhar seo agus ba mhaith an rud é dá mbeadh a thuilleadh dá shórt go flúirseach againn.

Sreath aistí atá ann—aistí taistil iseadh a leath—ag cur síos ar imeachtaí an údair i Ameireacá agus san Eoraip. Ós aisteoir é an t-údar ní gá a rá go mbainid go léir nach mór le cúrsaí aisteoireachta. San gcéad dréacht gheibhimid cuntas ar a óige, ar bhunú Amharclainne an Gheata agus Taidhbhearc na Gaillimhe. Níl ansan ach an tosach. Leanann "Rinceoirí i Seville," "An Turas Dearg," agus "Ó Chill Airne go Berlin" an chéad dréacht seo. Tá nithe suimiúla le rá aige ansan faoi "Dramaíocht Ghaeilge san Am atá le Teacht," "Triúr Scríbhneoirí i Nualitríocht na Rúise" agus "Éire agus an Ghaeilge san Am atá le Teacht."

Leabhar taithneamhach é tríd síos. Ach siad na smaointe aonracha a léiríonn eagna an údair is mó do thaithnigh liom. Mar shampla: "Mhúin mo mháthair dhom, agus mé i mo pháiste, gan bheith ag alpadh mo chuid bídh go cíocrach nó go mbeadh tinneas boilg is ae orm. . . . Tá fhios agam anois, agus mé im fhear, nach é an bia an t-aon rud amháin nach ceart é alpadh go cíocrach. Má bhímse ag déanamh rudaí nua lá i ndiaidh lae gan sos gan stad gan faoiseamh, feictear dhom gur ag alpadh an tsaoil atáim. Go cíocrach. Agus má dhéanann éinne sin . . . tig tinneas air. Ní amháin tinneas boilg ach tinneas anama" (lch. 111). Ba dheacair, sílim, léiriú níos fearr ar an nath Laidne: *non multa sed multum*, d'aimsiú. Ar aon dul leis sin tá a bhfuil ráite aige faoi léirmheastóireacht (lch. 147).

Bhí rud amháin, ámh, nach raibh mé ag súil leis. Níl aon bháidh aige leis na Gearmánaigh. Feictear dom go raibh sé ro-dhian orthu agus gur lig sé don "fuath fíochmhar" atá aige do na Nazi cur isteach ar a bhreith fá n-a dtaobh. Ach is beag an mháchail é sin ar leabhar gur fiú é go léir a léamh agus a athléamh. T. Mac an tSaoir.

Sir Jules Benedict (1804-1885), composer of *The Lily of Killarney*, etc.

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