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Bishop Halsall

# EDITORIAL

Huxley has it somewhere that experience is not so much what happens to a man as what a man does with what happens to him. Ability to improvise and make the best of circumstances is one of the characteristics of the Roman and during the last five years there have been plenty of opportunities of putting it into practice. In this respect at least, the Venerabile man of today is fully in the tradition of his predecessors. Consequently it is with no feeling of despair, although it is with regret, that we announce a reduction in the size of the Magazine. During the war our printer has done us sterling service and so far we have managed to keep to the original size. But now, although the paper shortage is easing slightly, skilled compositors are still being called up and those already in the Forces are not yet demobilised. It seems reasonable to hope that this state of affairs will not last long ; in the meantime we will do our best to meet the new circumstances and endeavour as much as is in our power to maintain the high standard and traditions of the past.

# THE GREATEST GITA

## I—MARCH ON ROME 1944

During four and a half years' foreign service THE VENERABILE never reached me. Only on my return did I read the great Gita Controversy that has sprung up since the Gita *sensu Romano* ceased to be. And so I have chosen my title—let readers judge whether in arrogance or not. At least it defines the nature of this article. It is not a piece of military history—the nearer you are to battle, the less you know of the military picture as a whole. It is quite simply a personal account of what I again insist, doubtless against angry clamour from the green-eyed envy of gentlemen in England who sat at home at ease, was the greatest gita of all. But let us be modest, too. We do not intend to " shoot a line ", to advance through bursting shells where no shells burst. It is not for us to emulate those Great Liars whose fascinating Odysseys have become immortal and have built up the Gita Legend. I will write simply what occurred, neither inventing nor borrowing to adorn the tale.

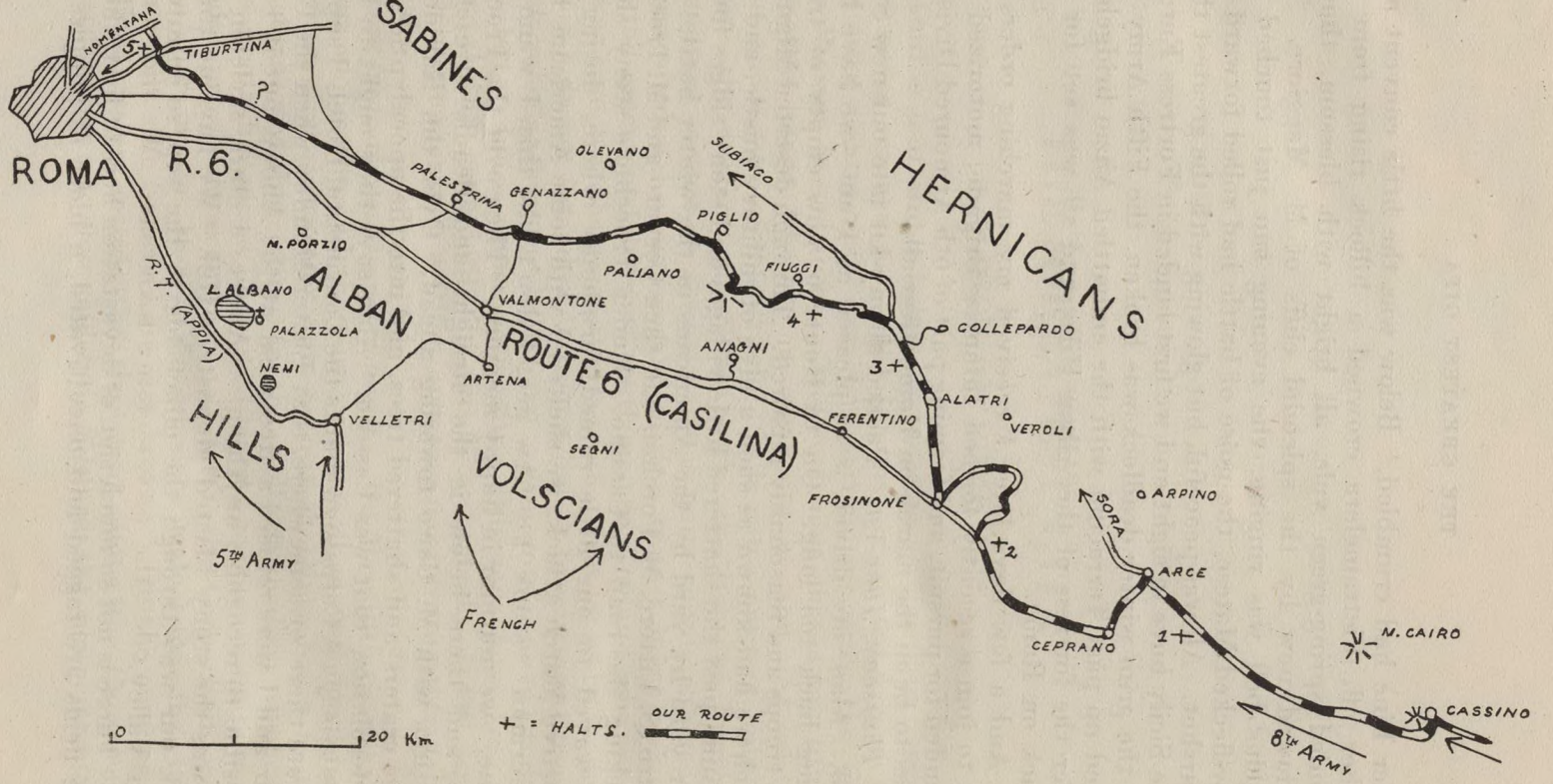
But first, the *status quaestionis*. On May 12th the assault opened on Cassino and the Gustav Line. I moved down next day from our winter mountain retreat at Campobasso to the rear of the fighting troops in the Volturno valley. There I joined first the forward Casualty Clearing Station in tents amid the wine-red clover near Vairano : later, the Corps Reinforcement Unit in the lovely Pietramelara vale. On the 18th Cassino fell : the Gustav Line was broken. On the evening of the 25th, sitting outside the Mess tent above the Cappuccini Convent where we were billeted, I heard the news that the

Hitler Line had crumbled. Below was the little convent and, further off, Pietramelara crowned a hillock rising from the secluded spring-green vale, all bright with blossom, though shadowed now by the splendid cliffs of M. Maggiore. The Angelus bell was ringing, the evening sun just touched the snow-flecked Matese, the noise of battle had rolled forward out of earshot. All was peaceful, but glowing with the greatest thrill since Sicily hove in sight and we first landed in Fortress Europe. For the grim winter deadlock was broken, the Fifth Army had linked up past Terracina with the embattled Anzio bridgehead under the fortress of the Alban Hills, and all was set for the attack on Rome.

And a few days later I received my marching orders. I was to join a recently formed Infantry Brigade, motorized and intended for pursuit, and forming part of 6th Armoured Division. I was to be in the march on Rome after all!

*Thursday, June 1st.* Packed all my kit into our new Standard. Alan, my driver, is as pleased as I am—we have been sitting back too long. On to Route 6, now empty of traffic and troops and reasonably repaired. Through deserted Mignano, which we had known as such a hive of military bustle, and into Latium, past the shattered little villages and stony ridges fought over yard by yard by the Americans in the winter battles: S. Pietro, S. Vittore, M. Porchia, and then Cervaro and M. Trocchio blocking the road to Cassino. Under Trocchio's stony slopes we waved to our little ruined farmhouse where, during the abortive March attack, we sheltered with some Americans from a German "stonk". "Aw gee, I don't like this, I wanna go home," we murmur in happy memory. Then over the Trocchio rise, and there below is the straight and deadly stretch to Cassino, with M. Cairo towering ahead. Over the Rapido by huge craters and shattered trees, and into the apocalyptic scene of desolation that was Cassino. Alan says they ought to keep it as it is. . . A Corps sign marks the Continental Hotel. I suppose we ate there, or somewhere, that Easter Monday when the Great Liar and I were refused a free meal at the Abbey, but it is impossible to recognize anything. Above, a stark skeleton ruin crowns the stony blasted Monastery Hill. We have no time to pick our way through the minefields to the top, so on into the Liri Valley.

There is not so much sign of devastation here at first, though the fields are ragged and uncultivated, a blaze of poppies and


SABINES
HERNICANS
ALBAN HILLS
VOLSCIANS
ROMA
R.6.
NOMENTANA
TIBURTINA
?
PALESTRINA
GENAZZANO
OLEVANO
SUBIACO
PIGLIO
FIUGGI
PALIANO
N. PORZIO
L. ALBANO
PALAZZOLA
A.A. (APPIA)
NEMI
VALMONTONE
ARTENA
ANAGNI
4+
3+
COLLEPARDO
ROUTE 6 (CASILINA)
FERENTINO
ALATRI
VEROLI
VELLETRI
SEGNI
FROSINONE
ARPINO
SORA
+2
ARCE
CEPRANO
1+
M. CAIRO
CASSINO
5th ARMY
FRENCH
8th ARMY
0
20 Km
+ = HALTS.
OUR ROUTE

(we hear) littered with dead. Stick-grenades and mortar bombs lie by the roadside. We pass the S. Lucia ravine and the shattered shell of Piedimonte, then the aerodrome and the side-lane leading to the ruin of Aquino : and we are through the Hitler Line. Traffic is heavy now and the road a mass of pot-holes : the dust of trucks and tanks rises in a choking cloud that dims out the Aurunci mountains on our left. In a copse near Roccasecca we scrounge a meal from Army H.Q. This Brigade is going to be hard to find—it is newly formed, so nobody knows it. Eventually we learn that its flash is the hunting horn on green. We cross the Melfa and come in sight of Rocca d'Arce on a precipice guarding the pass, turn aside into the Coldragone woods, and find them leaguered among the young oak. Introductions and tea—they are very pleasant, and I choose me a nice tree and pitch my bed.

The whole Brigade is concentrated in the Bosco here : if only we don't move for another day, I'll be able to get them all together for Mass and the Sacraments before we split up for the advance. We drive on through Arce. Here where Route 6 runs between the Rocca d'Arce and the M. Grande e Piccolo, the Germans made their last large-scale stand two or three days ago, and a burial party was gathering up bodies today on the M. Grande. We run through Ceprano and down a very bad bumpy and dusty lane to Div. H.Q. This is going to ruin our nice new Standard, which was made for roads, not for bumping down dirt-tracks and over fields.

Here we get the form, which I will put down so that you too may be " in the picture ". Fifth Army, linked with the Anzio show, are assaulting the strong German line in the Alban Hills. They are separated from Eighth Army (which is us) by the tangled Volscian peaks and glens, through which the French with their Goums are battering their way. We on Route 6 are rather back still : but since his stand at Arce, the enemy seems to be in retreat—we have taken Frosinone and are reported forward to Ferentino, and everything is lined up for the thrust towards the Valmontone Gap. Back to Brigade, and learn at dinner that my hopes of getting all the lads together are dashed—we move tomorrow. So to bed in the warm June air.

*Friday 2nd June.* Feel fresh as a daisy, wakening as the rising sun gilds the leaves of my little oak. We move early, but not far : the idea is to get the Brigade across the Bailey bridge over the Liri at Ceprano (which will be a long job), so as

to make a flying start tomorrow. Road jammed head to tail, but I am travelling " independently " and we cut past the convoy a good deal. At Arce the road branches to Sora, and we waved to Freyberg's New Zealanders who are pouring up towards the Abruzzi. Over the Ceprano bridge and we are in the Sacco valley : to our left the Ausonii are barely visible—gun fire and the smothering dust we raise have, I am sure, added to the normal summer haze.

It is only another 10 km. to our leaguer in the Macchia di Ripi. Brigade H.Q. track is jammed with vehicles, so I turn into "X" Battalion's field. We eat some sandwiches and then doze under a hedge while they are pulling in. When they are all settled I arrange for Mass, and we are soon fixed up in a corner of the field. A good Sergeant helps a lot—though he doesn't know it, this Communion is his Viaticum. The Standard is a good car : when the back is pulled down it makes a solid altar, though smirched with thick white dust spattered with oil. " D " Coy unfortunately are a mile away, so I go over to them and give them Holy Communion under a camouflage net. Suddenly a shattering roar, another and another, splits into our devotions. As I walk down to the car, I see the Mediums have moved into our field : red flame bursts from the long muzzles and the shocked air hits you like a blow. We drive bumpily over grass and tree-roots into our own leaguer—a charming grove of shrub-oak with a stretch of greensward on which to say my office. German litter is scattered around : cigarette cartons, news-sheets, obscene anti-Yank propaganda leaflets.

Uncertainty reigns—we may move tonight—so I stay up till midnight in the Mess tent. We hang up my lamp, which leaps in the air and swings wildly with the concussion of the 5.5's. News at last—we move at 0100 hours (1 a.m. to you) : we are to clear the right flank in the Hernicans, where Jerry is still lurking, while the main forces move up Route 6. " X " Battalion are to lead, so thank the Lord I caught them today. As I am quite self-contained and hate this convoy business anyway, I decide to have some sleep, rise at crack of dawn and overtake. So to sleep, broken by the irregular crash of guns behind, the whoosh of their shells overhead, and the stumbling and cursing of men departing in the dark.

*Saturday 3rd June.* Chilly crack of dawn, as planned. We snatch some tea and dry bread from the rear party, and on

the road at 5.45. There is a bridge broken at Frosinone, so we must circuit up the dusty Torrice sidetrack. We have timed this very nicely : there is little traffic on the road. German ammo. dumps, with mortar-bombs and rocket-frames (which I had never seen before), are parked all along the roadside. Eventually we drop down behind the back of Frosinone, which stands tower-crowned but badly looted (we hear) on its hill : then, in convoy again, we leave Route 6 and turn up the Alatri road, which is our Div. axis. By the time we reach the Veroli turn we've already outdistanced Brigade. Alatri crowns a high hill 2,500 yards ahead—the M.P. on duty here tells me German snipers were still there a few hours ago—it behoves us to tread delicately : after all, there is no real need to go in front of our troops ! The M.P. thinks so too, and makes his confession and Communion kneeling by the roadside.

Here we are under the huge grey Hernicans : ahead, the rolling Ciociaria, land of the thick red Piglio wine, hides the Sacco valley. On the right the Veroli road is swarming with Indian troops. I locate our " Y " Battalion in some cornfields. They are only halting for a few hours, and it is impossible to gather them all together. So I say Mass in the stubble for H.Q. Coy, hear " B " Coy's confessions and give them Holy Communion in a ditch : and they are off. We get some bread and cheese at Brigade, and then undertake to lead the medical convoy up to Alatri, where we see a Fascist being escorted off by two tommy-gunners. Down the hill we drive on the far side, past a shattered farm where some dead mules pollute the air. But a " Deceased Animal Disposal Unit " has already put up its sign and is getting to work. Two miles below Alatri our Brigade sign has already been planted—we crash through the standing corn and bag a large fig-tree for our night's rest. Here we are pressed in by the mountains, right under the wild ravine of Collepardo, beyond which the Hernicans, La Monna, and Pizzodetta, rise nearly 7,000 feet and still snow-topped. Legendary Collepardo ! I never thought to crash past it in the guise of a brutal invader.

The A.P.M. is a Catholic, and we brew up some " char " together. Three German prisoners walk in, then a full truck load : they are still lurking in all the hills around us, and the " line " (if you can call it such) is only just up the road. I stroll forward and find " Y " again, who are to lead the advance tomorrow. The lads are all around the cookhouses having dinner,

so I catch " A ", " C ", and " D " Companies in turn (whom I had missed this morning), and another fifteen come to Communion.

A very noisy night : streams of traffic, including tracked vehicles, rumble past ; and several tanks decide to share our field, clanking and crashing through us in the dark. All night the guns roar behind Alatri and their shells whoosh overhead—

*Sunday 4th June*—and in the small hours a new gun comes into action, screaming very low at an angle over our heads. Our crack-of-dawn start has been cancelled (not before some unlucky ones had got up), so I drive up the road to find " Z " Battalion. They were the noise-makers who clattered up the road late last night. They are only just stirring themselves from sleep, so I fix things up and say Mass for them. This is very satisfying—I have caught all the Battalions, even while on the move, within 48 hours, and feel very content. Only the gunners remain now.

We drive on to the fork where the main road carries on to Guercino and Subiaco : the Indians are moving up this on our right flank. There is some confusion at the crossroads, which have just been neatly shelled. Ominous bangs sound ahead, but these are probably our own R.H.A., whom I am trying to catch : so we move up the Piglio road, albeit cautiously, and turn away from the high Hernicans. The A(dvanced) D(ressing) S(tation) has just pitched its penthouse in a field under Trevigliano, so we call in. Almost immediately the first casualties arrive : " Y " are catching a packet in the thick woods ahead. Their M.O. is one of the first arrivals, hit in the spine. He knows he's done for, and we stretch him out on the grass verge to wait for the returning ambulance. There is no time to hear the medical orderlies' confessions, as I'd intended, but I catch a few stray gunners (not actually mine). Two bodies are brought in : we sew them up and bury them here on the spot. . .

Then after some tea, we drive on through pretty wooded country, past the now peaceful wood where " Y " caught it two hours ago, into Fiuggi. High jinks here : the lads are looting the *villeggiatura* hotels and staggering away to their trucks with spring mattresses. Further on we find all our R.H.A. Regiment, less one Battery, and some Mediums, banging away lustily. Their H.Q. tells me the guns are rather scattered, so I abandon the car and penetrate on foot into the dark chestnut woods. In their green depths they breathe the very atmosphere

of Palazzola : and, like the Palazzola woods, they are very deceiving and I soon find myself on the wrong track. No better hiding place for the straggling, and perhaps still vicious, German could be found. I decide to wander no further and get back on to the right track, guided by the shaking crash of the 5.5's. It is thunderous and overcast, and by the time I find my first Battery in a little glen, heavy drops are falling.

These lads had Mass off someone yesterday, but there are a few who missed, so I attend to them. Afterwards I crouch with the Sergeant over some tea in his truck while rain pelts down and peals of thunder mingle with the cannons' roar. Returning past the 5.5's, I am just walking under the long barrel when they pull the string and the tremendous clap of air nearly takes off my beret. Slightly stunned, I find the other Battery in another secluded glen. One Troop crouches in a three-tonner for confessions and Communion as the rain pelts down again : the other Troop receives the consolations of Holy Mother Church dripping in a ditch. The prayers, which I always say out loud for them, are much interrupted by these slamming guns beside us. Then back through the wet to my car, very pleased to have finished that successfully.

The road ahead is hopelessly blocked, so we drive up to Fiuggi town to have look-see, and then back a mile to our night's location in a very damp cornfield. The rumour is confirmed—Rome was entered this morning ! I lost thirty shillings on this, having round Christmas time pessimistically bet that we would not take Rome by our own unaided efforts, i.e. without the help of the Second Front. I am delighted to have lost and that we've done it under our own steam. Nobody seems to know what the form is for tomorrow, so I pitch my bed, snuggle damply under the mosquito net, and hope for the best.

*Monday 5th June.* Guns very noisy all night, but the rain held off, though my clothes are damp and clammy. The form seems to be that we bypass Rome and advance swiftly towards Tivoli to cut off the German retreat. Despite the capture of Rome, Jerry is still in the Prenestini and our advance is a rather unorthodox cut across his front, or so the pundits say. Brigade takes rather a long time winding itself up, so we drive off ahead. A little past yesterday's halt we find the remaining R.H.A. Battery, and do them—now I have done the whole Brigade, every Company and every Battery, and feel satisfied. It is pleasant green country with a glimpse of M. Viglio on the right,

which I once climbed in the rain with another Great Liar who recently wrote in these pages on Wine ; though he was not so much a Liar as an Eclectic, for his stories were true but not always his own.

Past Acuto the road wriggles round the bare steep Pila Rocca : then suddenly and unexpectedly we turn a corner and there—O wondrous sight!—stretches the whole classic panorama, and every crag and every mountain village is redolent of memory. For this at last is Home. I stop the car on the edge of the dusty road : there below is the Sacco Valley with Anagni and Paliano jutting out on low spurs : opposite are the bleak Volscians with their villages like eagles' nests—Artena, Segni, Roccamassima. Ahead the bare grey Prenestini, crowned by Rocca di Cave and Castel S. Pietro, stand guard over the Valmontone Gap : and beyond the Gap, the hazy familiar Alban Hills. I sit in the dust and marvel. It is very peaceful, for there is nobody on the road, except one solitary tank. This begins to talk to itself over its radio, so we go over and listen. " Four Tiger tanks in Olevano with 30 Germans ", it says, " and three heavy machine guns in Roiate." So the road ahead is still under flanking fire.

We drive on ; drinking in the view, past several brewed up Panthers and a Tiger or two, to Piglio. Here are quite a lot of troops. The Italians have abandoned a very far-gone body in an inadequate boxwood coffin in the monastery mortuary, next to where some troops have set up a cookhouse. I am just going to break it open for identification before burying the poor abandoned body, when a Frat turns up, and I leave it to him. I administer the sacraments to some scantily-clad gunners, and then we have tea in a stable entered by a large shell-hole in the wall. Brigade hasn't turned up yet, so I say an afternoon Mass for some Yeomanry, and we just finish in time before a thunderstorm sweeps down the Piglio ravine.

Brigade catches up and we all move on again, down into the valley and past the Olevano gorge—the Tigers must have decided to beat it, for we would make a pretty target from Olevano. Now we move very slowly, jammed in convoy, under the Prenestini : and here we link up with the French. They have come pouring down this morning from the Volscians and have just beaten us to Palestrina. I ask one officer what their show in the Volscians was like. " Ah, beaucoup de morts, pas de prisonniers ", he says. Looking at his Goums, I believe him.

Now we are at the Valmontone-Genazzano crossroads, and inextricably jammed. The A.P.M. says the jam goes all the way to Cave, so I turn off to Genazzano. The little bridge is broken, so I get out and walk up alone, and very soon am mobbed by an excited crowd. The C.N.L. (Comitato Nazionale di Liberazione) comes out to meet me. "*Signor capitano*, we killed two Germans this morning, and others are in prison here, with many Fascists, and their *cappellano militare—ma che, ecco un fascista quel cappellano!*" (You will realise, gentle and clerical reader, that we were all dressed simply in shorts and an open-necked khaki shirt—the gita parallel holds good in this also). I insist that I have come first to visit the Santuario: they are deeply impressed and accompany me with cries of enthusiasm. A bomb has dropped straight on dome and high altar, but the Miraculous Picture in the side-chapel is safe, though its miraculous powers have been prudently reinforced by brickwork. I say the Rosary out loud and give the faithful my blessing. Then, outside, vino is brought and healths are drunk: on the way back I am waylaid by the C.N.L. with more vino of a very good quality, and I make a speech to explain why all the prisoners of war are not coming back tomorrow. "*Cari miei, anche noi non possiamo tornare a casa perchè mancano i mezzi.*" This, if not cheering, is better than raising false hopes—which have not been fulfilled even at the time of writing.

After this happy interlude we rejoin the convoy, which moves slowly through bomb-shattered Cave. It is dusk by the time we reach Palestrina, and we move forward into the dark. No one knows when or where we are to stop. We pass through the grounds of some large villa where trucks are pulling in and men shouting in the dark—surely this must be San Pastore? But there is no rest for us: our wheels turn off the comparatively main road on to a bad bumpy lane. On the left the Alban Hills are silhouetted against the moonlight, and I feel very annoyed that we are passing through this part in the dark. But annoyance yields to sheer exhaustion. Alan is falling asleep over the wheel, so I take over. The moon goes down and it is very dark. It was not so bad while we could follow the tail-light of the truck in front, but now the French are shouting to us to extinguish all lights. One crawls along a few hundred yards, then stops, and at once you doze off over the wheel till someone yells to move on. Also we have had nothing to eat since some bread and cheese over twelve hours ago, except

for some cherries presented in Genazzano, which I share with a haggard officer. Now we are on a Roman road, the car bucketing horribly over the Roman paving-blocks. From that day to this I have never decided what road it was! My guess is the Collatina—let " brickers " who search for the site of Gabii search one day for the probable route of our march on Rome. We are very tired—

*Tuesday 6th June*—and round about 2 a.m. we pull off into a field. Guns are flashing all along our right flank, and this open Campagna gives you a very naked exposed feeling. But this is only a vague thought as I throw a blanket on the ground and fall straight asleep. Almost at once, it seems, rude voices break into our peace—barely an hour's sleep and we must move on. . . I pull my boots on, shake Alan awake, heave the blankets back into the car: and off again. The strain of driving in the dark with no lights and jammed-up eyelids is even worse, but we grind on, losing all sense of time. About 5 a.m. we leaguer down at last in another field. I don't know where we are, and I don't care. The good earth engulfs me in sleep like a feather bed.

8.30. Blink awake in the sunshine. We are in the Campagna all right—there ahead is Gennaro. Someone shouts out our location—we are five miles from Rome, on a side-road between the Nomentana and Tiburtina! I jump up as if the second bell was ringing—this is no time for lying abed. Over breakfast I learn that we'll not move till after lunch. Nearly four years ago I remember thinking, as a vague romantic dream, of entering Rome in the van of a conquering army. Now is the chance, and by St Thomas we'll do it, though all the white-helmed M.P.'s in the U.S.A. try to stop us!

We turned on to the Via Tiburtina, and ran along past the dark cypresses of the Campo Verano, past bombed-out San Lorenzo, through the Porta Tiburtina and into ROME. What can I say of that moment? The City was undamaged, the streets full of people, the shops open, the trees and gardens green, dignified and lovely. . . We drove down the Via Nazionale, saw Piazza Venezia full of American jeeps and the Allied flags waving from Mussolini's balcony, down Corso Vittorio, turned off at the Cancelleria, through the Campo, round the corner into the Monserra', and with fierce triumphant blasts of our horn, swung into the cortile. And so, in sweat-stained

shirt and shorts, dusty boots and a khaki beret, I stepped out to occupy the Venerable English College. . .

* * * * *

The condition of the College has been described in a letter already published in THE VENERABILE of November 1944. Raniero welcomed me, and what is more, recognized me. I knelt in the church, thinking of all the times we hurriedly bent the knee before rushing out to schools, of my ordination and first Mass here, of morning meditation, of all I had learnt and all I had forgotten or lost since then. I visited the Sisters and the garden and the Salone. Then the Knights of Malta showed me over their hospital, and in the Common Room the rows of patients greeted the *Signor capitano inglese* with pitiful friendliness. But time was short, and after distributing the few cigarettes I had with me, we set off like proper First Year men on the next stage of our pilgrimage—up the Monserra', across yellow Tiber, to St Peter's. Here I had expected to dismount reverently outside neutral territory, but the Vatican seemed to have been caught out by the unexpected speed of the German flight. No barriers were up at the frontier, and American jeeps, armoured cars and even a couple of small tanks were parked up at St Peter's steps.

So once again I knelt at the shrine of the Prince of the Apostles.

* * * * *

We returned by the Nomentana across the Aniene, and at lunch heard the news of the Second Front. That afternoon I said Mass for the Medium gunners beside us, who were pounding away at Monterotondo. Our advance for some reason was cancelled, and we slept on the same spot.

(*To be continued.*)

R. P. REDMOND, S.C.F.

# ROMANESQUES

## 41.—INFIRMARIANS.

It is clearly very wrong to attribute motives to the actions of others but it would seem almost inhuman to condemn a man who, whilst reserving final judgment, hazards a guess betimes at the contents of his neighbour's mind. The appearance on the notice-board of a new list of Household Officers was calculated to provoke such hazardous guesses. To select the right man for the right post from a community of eighty which aimed at a large measure of autonomy and expected a high degree of efficiency was no easy task ; great was the scope for the student body to scrutinize the judgment of the Superiors and in occasional cases of the square peg in the round hole to seek, in all charity, to justify or explain the misfit. Certain appointments were foregone conclusions. That man who distracted one at Rosary by pulling out coils and terminals with his beads was the obvious Electrician. The new Choirmaster was the only man in his age-group who knew the precise difference between a quilisma and a demi-semi-quaver or who could describe the respective habits and functions of each. Against these specialised occupations there were many jobs which required little talent and no previous experience—hence the speculation. Was this Librarian chosen to cure him of his bookishness or to instil in him a habit of reading ? Was this particular Bell-Ringer selected because he was always up with the lark or because the lark had not yet made his acquaintance ? Why should a giant of six feet three be appointed Flower Sacristan ? Perhaps to refine him, to teach him the social graces . . . *chi lo sa ?* Let one wiser than I solve these knotty problems ; my own preoccu-

pation is to decide the category of the Infirmarians. Could it be said of the Infirmarian as of the Organist, Electrician and Choirmaster, *ab incunabulis specimen dedit* or was he a mere casual picked out at random from the rank and file? Theoretically, one imagines a careful search for a suave, sympathetic man with the keen eye and the firm, sensitive hand; one with a good bedside manner; one, in short, who would not compare unfavourably with Florence Nightingale or San Camillo de Lellis. It is remarkable, indeed, how soon these qualities were acquired . . . but I am evading the question of the raw material. And wisely, too, perhaps, for looking back over the extremely varied line of Infirmarians, I realize how very hazard-


ous it would be even to guess at the reasonings which determined their election.

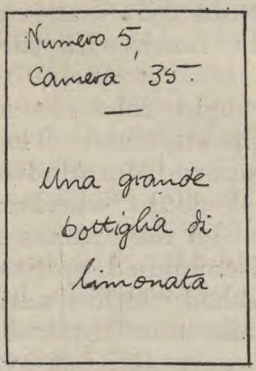
In social standing there was, of course, as much difference between the First and Second Infirmarian as between, let us say, an Archimandrite and a Junior Curate. A man who had safeguarded the health of the House for a year must have many wrinkles to give to the neophyte promoted to the rung on the ladder so recently vacated by himself. The Senior Practitioner would take the first opportunity of introducing his assistant to the secrets of the Profession. Apologising for the meagre library, he would present him with the St John's Ambulance booklet containing useful information about bandages and splints and indicating the line of action to be taken in cases of burns,

faintings and fits. The other volume might be consulted in the Senior's room but on no account taken away. This was certainly an imposing tome. Though without cover and dog-eared from years of assiduous use, it purported to describe (at the date of publication) every known ailment from A to Z. This statement in our generation was not quite true, for prescinding from the advancement in Medical Science in the last half century, the book was free from anything up to and including ABDOMINAL complaints—it certainly had ARTHRITIS—and expired with either TYPHOID or VARICOSE VEINS. Then, of course, the working of the thermometer had to be explained ; it must always be sterilized before use ; a sharp flick of the wrist would bring the mercury down ; each patient should be given a fair chance by starting him from scratch. The Assistant might even be entrusted with the dispensing after supper. When making his début a certain Infirmarian was instructed to administer doses of different medicines to three patients who were expected ; the one who came was not allowed to leave until he had consumed the doses meant for three !

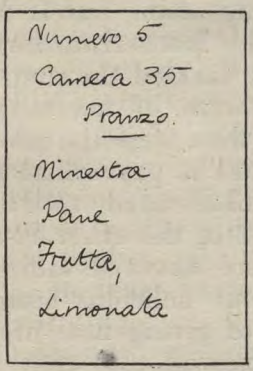
Lest I begin to spread alarm among a certain class of people who set a high price on a student's life, let me introduce Sabbi—the College Doctor. It would be impertinent of me to enumerate the many virtues of this perfect Italian gentleman but I shall go so far as to say that when one of the *camerieri*—with flagrant disregard of the Decree of Urban VIII—described him as " un vero santo ", he was not far wide of the mark. Sabbi was always at our service. Several times a week No. 1 would be heard at the telephone, " Ecco che parla l'infermeriere del Collegio inglese. Potrebbe venire stasera il Dottore perchè vi sono due ammalati ? Grazie." The Doctor had a charming habit of saying everything in two languages and as the Infirmarian accompanied him round the rooms the conversation proceeded on these or similar lines : " Buona sera, Good evening. Come va la gamba, 'ow is the leg ? " or laying his smooth head on the back of the patient, " Spira—breathe ". There was one quaint phrase which he never put into Italian and which was always pronounced with a note of triumph, " It is the bronks—you smoka too much ". We had a great affection for Sabbi and, apart from the matter of smoking, great confidence in his judgment. He had a high reputation in the city as several visiting specialists informed us, and the fact that the last English College man to be laid to rest in the Campo Santo was Monsignor

Giles, *potius senio quam morbo consumptus*, is a tribute to his patient care. The principle was that if the Infirmarians were in any doubt at all, then Sabbi was to be called. If you quote the case of the man who was treated for peritonitis with cold spaghetti, I reply that this crime cannot be laid at the door of the Infirmarians and, in any case, Sabbi arrived in time.

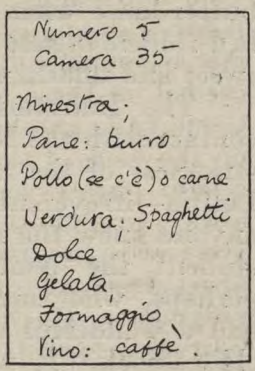
The first intimation that someone was ill would often be a report from his neighbour that he had not appeared in church ; an empty place at breakfast would dispel any hopes or fears that it was merely a case of oversleeping. In due course the Infirmarian would visit the room indicated, tap lightly on the door lest the patient be robbed of nature's sweet balm, gently insinuate himself into the room and survey his victim. His trained eye would look for the tell-tale signs, the flushed countenance, the coated tongue ; he would take the temperature and note the racing pulse. . . All too often he would be greeted with the words " Bad pot " which is basic English for a chill on the stomach which attacks those who trust the warmth of the Southern night and forget the cold of the early morning. Having prescribed for the disease—Magnesia Bisurata was a faithful standby—the food problem had to be tackled and a slip of paper was produced and headed with linen and room number. Breakfast presented little difficulty and if pain were severe would probably not be taken at all. I give below specimen copies of the diet sheet for the ordinary cases of indisposition. It is worthy of note that St Paul's advice in the matter of beverages was invariably disregarded in the first stages ; it should also be stated that after the crisis the convalescent was allowed to choose his own diet.




1st DAY




2nd DAY




3rd DAY et seq

Meals for the sick were a grave problem. The distance from the kitchen to some rooms upstairs and along corridors was considerable and made the effort of conveying food hot from producer to consumer most trying. All sorts of suggestions were made from dumb waiters to mobile canteens but the Food Cans were never superseded. These primitive utensils were craftily conceived and almost defy verbal description. At the risk of infringing the Patent Rights—if such things persist from the days of Gracchi Bros, Ltd—I shall give the general principle and hope that a draughtsman may be found to give plan and elevation. There was one tin can or container for each course or ingredient of each course; the cans fitted one on top of the other into a metal frame which was held by a wooden handle. The bottom container held hot water (or soup) and the other containers were placed on top in strict ascending order of degrees of heat. Heat, I emphasize, was the only qualification; the enduring success of the Food Can must be solely attributed to the iron rule of the Hierarchy of Heat. Thus in addition to his physical sufferings the sick man had the agonizing task of unhooking the containers and arranging them in the correct order—and they certainly retained the heat. The soup at the bottom besides performing its main calorific task gave a certain indefinable odour and taste to its ascendants, to wit, the spag, the potatoes, the veg., the meat, and—*mehercule*—even to the sweet. The only objection a reasonable man might have against this wonderful contraption would be on the grounds of its instability; it had an annoying habit of losing its balance. I do not believe that solitary Englishmen dress for dinner in the wilds of Africa, it is just possible that some people use the butter-knife when eating alone, but it is certain that many a bed-ridden *inglese* in the Monserrato began his lunch with the sweet and unashamedly tackled the soup can last.

The Infirmarians were of necessity brought into closer contact with the Nuns than were the rest of the students. The strictness of the clausura is proverbial and apart from Madre Letitia—irreverently abbreviated to Tishy—I doubt whether anyone knew the names of the other Sisters. To the ordinary student the Nuns were devoted ladies, disembodied spirits perhaps, who turned out delicious spag, washed clothes and had a wonderful way of giving new life to the most tattered old cassock. It was known, too, that they were assisted by several girls of incredible strength who vied with the Sisters

in saying interminable Aves as they beat the carpets or basted the meat. Should some rare business necessitate a personal call to the kitchen most of us faced with extreme trepidity the Ordeal of the Hatch. The Infirmarian, having attuned his ear to the velocity of their dialectic Italian, found them always obliging and very human. One dear old nun never failed to express her sympathy with the student who was ill; as the Infirmarian ordered the meal she would say, in that delightful diminutive, "Poveretto" —with just the right inflection to suit the seriousness of the case. The most amazing thing about the nuns was the way they knew all the students not by name but by number. "They lisped", as one of the Popes said, "in numbers and the numbers came." How they made mere numbers live was something of a mystery; it was suggested that their mental pictures were formed from the amount a man ate, from the way he folded his table-napkin, the size of his clothes or the number of holes in his socks. I discovered, however, that they knew us better than we supposed for when I failed to react to a number they would sometimes condescend to qualify it by a personal description such as, "quell' alto biondo", "quel piccolo grosso che sempre canta".


When a case demanded it or when there was a large number of sick men, the Infirmary was used. It was spacious and well-appointed and gave a good aerial view of the goldfish and the tortoise in the garden; being at the end of the side wing of the building, it gave a sense of security from the hurly-burly of college life and was too near the Capellar' ever to be dull. There was company in the Infirmary but it often happened that several patients would be in the convalescent stage and ready for a pillow-fight or a romp in the bath-chair which formed part of the furniture, while others might not be well enough to enjoy the fun. The casualties from the Whit Gita of 1935 were very subdued as they itched and ached after their indiscretions in

the burning Fregene sun, but they soon recovered and there is a photograph extant of the cast of a theatrical performance they gave for their own entertainment and for which they required, it seems, every single article from the adjoining Green Room. They went down to history as The Leper Colony and one of their number lived to become an Infirmarian. He it was who urged the redecoration of the sick quarters in a pleasing sanitary white; the shaded bed-lights and mirrors were due to his initiative. He procured the two white dispensary coats which the Cricket Club found so useful for the umpires and he caused consternation by exhibiting a VIETATO FUMARE sign in the dispensary. We were relieved but not surprised to find that he regarded this last item merely as part of the decorative scheme with no political significance whatever.

'MERELY A PART OF THE DECORATIVE SCHEME'

I have tried to give a picture of the routine life of an Infirmarian and now mention must be made of Emergency Calls. Just as the Electrician always seemed to be in the offing at the precise moment when a fuse was blown so the Infirmarians had an uncanny way of appearing as from nowhere when a casualty occurred. The man who slipped downstairs and twisted his ankle in the morning meditation rush would discover an Infirmarian just behind ready to carry him back to the warm bed he had unwillingly vacated. Almost before the footballer had realised that his leg was broken he would find himself in improvised splints being whisked away in *carrozza* or taxi to the haven of rest in the Via San Stefano Rotondo. Little sympathy was expressed for anyone who fell into the hands of the Blue Nuns; on the contrary he was deemed extremely fortunate and deputations would visit him to congratulate him on his luck and envy the luxurious comfort in which he lived. The Infirmarian was a frequent visitor and was often an interested spectator at minor operations and a ring-side seat was reserved for him in

the X-ray Clinic. The unfortunate men who were taken to the distant Monte Mario Sanatorium were not forgotten ; the charitably inclined would purchase large quantities of *bombe* or cherries to take to the invalid and coax him back to normal appetite by scoffing the larger part themselves. The malcontents complained that the flaw in the Health System of the College lay in the amenities for convalescence ; several were sent off to Frascati, Fiesole, Capri and Malta to recuperate but it was felt that if the scheme had been on a much larger scale it would have had a beneficent influence on the health and spirits of the students.


— BY SCOFFING THE GREATER PART THEMSELVES

Space and a certain delicacy forbid that I should indulge in personal reminiscence. I should like to give the authentic account of the attempted murder at the Villa when one of the servants saved himself from the knife of his companion by dealing him a blow on the head with a water bottle. I learnt from this that it is imprudent to urge the duty of brotherly love while dressing a wound. I was instrumental, too, in having Mrs Luigi removed to the Albano Hospital but it took the good lady just as long to assess the merits of that institution as it took her son to decide that the Frascati Sem. was not the place for him—one night ! Such matters and indeed the whole question of Infirmarians and the health of the House are really too serious to be handled by the flippant creatures who are barred from Nova et Vetera and only entrusted with the Romanesque. However, I think the discerning while running and reading

through these notes will conclude that we were not badly off in the matter of care of the health. The Rector and Vice seldom failed in a daily visit of the sick ; the two Infirmarians between them had a practical work-a-day knowledge and were usually sensible enough to know their limitations. I believe that the Roman climate and the Spartan seminary life quickly brings to light any serious constitutional weakness but that the average man will come through seven years perhaps a little thinner but none the worse for that. I suppose the medical history of most during our course would not be worse than a couple of doses of influenza, one or two chills on the stomach and a few hundred mosquito or sand-fly bites. One can hardly call this an excessive price to pay for living in a foreign country. Such a sick list does little to discredit the Englishman's boast of adaptability to any climate.


Although one may not be able to define exactly what qualities marked out a man for Infirmarian one can say that even the most unpromising people turned out successes. Whether this was a case of accomplishment following *ex opere operato* or not, I would not like to say, but certain it is that they learned from their job the broadening lesson that

> " There are more things in heaven and earth, Gregorian,
> Than are dreamt of in your Philosophy ".

JOHN DOUGLAS KEY.

# THE OXFORD OF THE MARTYRS

"There are but few Gospellers there and many Papists."[1]

Oxford will ever be dear to the faithful in England, to all Catholics including the most loyal of Cantabs, for reasons transcending all partisanship. It is historical verity, not party spirit, that claims for her a greater share in the battle for the old religion of England and Christendom. None the less every true Oxonian will hold Cambridge in special honour for her own cloud of witnesses, headed by St John Fisher, a bishop as holy and glorious as St Thomas of Canterbury, and that pattern of heroic charity and humility Blessed John Houghton, the prior of the London Charterhouse. This alone would be a great offset to Cranmer, Parker and other leading renegades, and enough to take the sting from the old jest that Cambridge reared the reformers and Oxford burnt them. Again I make bold to say that the part of Cambridge in the Second Spring has been too much overlooked and that of the Oxford Movement not a little exaggerated. A full decade before Keble's Assize Sermon in 1833, Kenelm Digby had returned to the Catholic Faith, and was soon followed by Ambrose Phillips de Lisle and the saintly George Spencer who is known to us as Father Ignatius the Passionist. All three came from Trinity College, Cambridge; all three did noble work for the conversion of England, which has been so perversely and obdurately hindered by that Anglo-Catholicism which seems to be the most lasting outcome of the Oxford Movement.

In the days of the English Herod the two Universities gave their many witnesses to the Truth, and if it is to Oxford that

[1] Parkhurst. *Zur. Lett.* No. 12. May 21st, 1559.

we devote our article the reason lies in the fact that many of our own College Martyrs and those responsible for the establishment of the English College in Rome were Oxonians. It is of interest to learn what was the intellectual background of such men as Blessed Ralph Sherwin and Dr Owen Lewis, and how Elizabethan Oxford compared with Renaissance Rome.

We can only cast a bird's eye glance over Oxford's earlier story. Mr Belloc maintains that Oxford must have been a Roman town, although no evidence thereof has come to light, and no Roman road went through it. When the new Examination Schools in the High Street were built in 1876, a settlement was discovered admittedly pre-Roman. With all my veneration for Belloc and his great work for reclaiming historical truth, I cannot wonder if his theory has found few supporters. After all, the English in the time of St Bede were surely civilised enough to build a town, even if it fell short of the magnificence of Middlesbrough, although they had not yet achieved the packing-cases of steel and concrete or bolted plates of wrinkled iron, that now pass for architecture.

Now it is precisely to the time of St Bede that the earliest traditions point, in the story of St Frideswide, who died in the same year as he, 735. Although we have no early life of her, there is no reason for doubting the traditions recorded long after, that she was the daughter of an underking, Dadian, who after his wife's death built a church and convent at Oxford dedicated to Our Lady and All Saints, where his daughter with twelve companions took the veil. Her would-be wooer, Algar, Lord of Leicester, tried to drag her thence by force. With two of her nuns Frideswide fled to a place called Bentona, probably Abingdon, and lived in hiding there for three years, after which she came back to Oxford, only to leave it soon for the secluded Binsey about two miles away. Here a spring, said to be a miraculous answer to her prayers, is still to be seen near the village church. It was here that she made a convent or cell of boughs or osiers, and even in her lifetime the place was visited by many pilgrims. After her death the saint's body was translated to the church her father founded.

The first documentary mention of Oxford is in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle which tells us how in the year 912 Edward the Elder won back from the Danes " London and Oxford and all the lands that owed obedience thereto ". Even the loftiest criticism will hardly deny that a place of such evident strategic

importance must have had time to grow. But we have direct evidence a little earlier in coins of King Alfred and the famous Alfred jewel in the Ashmolean Museum bearing the inscription Ocsnaforda. The obvious meaning of the name is the probable one, for the town was both a frontier station between Mercia and Wessex and a place where the Thames was fordable, and consequently of military importance. At some period before or during the Danish wars the castle mound was fortified to protect the town on the west, and here the Norman Robert D'Oilly, the conqueror's constable, built the strong castle of which one tower is still standing. One of the tokens of Oxford's early growth is the number of churches. That of St Mary, later the university church, is probably a preconquest foundation and is named in Domesday book as belonging to the king. St Martin's church at Carfax was given by King Cnut to the monks of Abingdon in 1032. St Aldate's is mentioned in Domesday; the name is probably St Olave's, making a pre-Norman origin likely.

In the Middle Ages many other churches and chapels arose and in 1440 Oxford had "twenty or more parish churches, three wayside chapels, three great monasteries". The walls had been rebuilt and strengthened by the Normans, and it is arresting to reflect that all the fierce life of mediaeval Oxford passed within a circuit one could traverse from gate to gate, east to west in ten minutes, and north to south in five. There were however churches and houses outside the walls, even as early as Domesday, where 243 houses are named as paying geld, and 478 as too waste and destroyed to do so. We are not warranted in reading into this any resistance to the Norman Conquest. The portions of the wall remaining, as in New College Gardens, are later than Norman.

During the twelfth century there was a great inflow of scholars and lecturers and the nascent university gradually took form. Hitherto the town had been of military and civic importance. With the thirteenth century the university soon takes the lead, grows rapidly, is more and more organised and settled, obtains increasing privileges and their confirmation by the sovereign till the town shrinks into the background and is altogether overshadowed. Only in the nineteenth century does it once more play an important part as a city.

It was the coming of the friars that spurred on the older orders and quickened to an amazing degree the intellectual life,

strenuous to fierceness, that made the name of Oxford great for all time. In 1221 the Dominicans came to Oxford, followed three years later by the Franciscans. Of their homes hardly a trace remains, but both have returned in our century to new ones. They were followed by the Carmelites, to whom Edward I gave Beaumont Palace. In 1252 came the Austin Friars, on the site of whose suppressed house Wadham College was founded in the days of James I. The Trinitarians, Crutched Friars and Brethren of the Sack had houses also. But it was the Dominicans and Franciscans that carried all before them. From the former house came Robert Kilwardby, Archbishop of Canterbury, John of St Giles, Richard Fishacre, and others ; from the latter came forth Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, Nicholas de Lyra, John Peckham or Peacham, Archbishop of Canterbury, William Ockham and Peter Philardo, later Pope Alexander V. Grosteste, Bishop of Lincoln, though not himself a Franciscan, lectured there and St Thomas of Hereford was among their pupils. So that the period from about 1220 to 1270 may truly be called the golden age of Oxford.

The example of the friars stirred the older orders to make provision for a highly educated priesthood. It should be born in mind that the gateway to the learned professions of law and medicine was through the minor orders of the clergy, and the cassock and square cap of the clerks still live on in the black gown and stiff square cap (or " mortar-board ") of the undergraduate. Clerk and cleric were of course originally the same word ; all learning was clerical.

The unruly truant life of student and master could not be allowed to go unchecked without ruinous harm to study, and the sight of the disciplined friar student communities pointed to a remedy, which the secular clergy applied a little before the monks. Their foundations, warped to Anglican and, later, secular principles, survive ; those of the religious went down in the Henrician revolution.

The Benedictines in a chapter held at Gloucester in 1277 resolved upon building a priory at Oxford for a house of studies, open to any Benedictine monastery and supported by contributions from them all. This was achieved after some years in Gloucester College, which chiefly served the west and south-west. The robber king suppressed it and the buildings passed through various hands, including those of Dr Robert King, schismatic bishop of Oxford and last abbot of Oseney, who basely surren-

dered it in 1539. At length it was bought by the Catholic Sir Thomas White, who leased it to William Stocke, who opened it as St John the Baptist's Hall on the saint's feast in 1560. Tradition caused the name Gloucester Hall to prevail. Stocke was a Catholic and while president of St John's made another Catholic, William Palmer, principal of the Hall. Fearing arrest he resigned his presidency and became once more principal here till his retirement in 1573. This somewhat anomalous Gloucester Hall became a refuge for Catholics, although a precarious one, and is of special Catholic interest.[1] Among its distinguished sons were the poet monk John Lydgate, Thomas Myling, Thomas Winchome and John Whethampsted. Another, John Feckenham, last abbot of Westminster under Mary, was a noble confessor in Elizabethan days. The Queen would have made him primate had he conformed to her supremacy. After a long imprisonment he died at Wisbech in 1585. Feckenham transmitted the succession of the English congregation in the Benedictine Order. As abbot he had received and clothed Dom Sigebert Buckley, who, in prison, at the age of ninety, gave the habit to two secular priests seeking to enter the Order a little before his death in 1607, and so made the English Black Monks continuous with those of the Ages of Faith, from St Augustine onwards. Gloucester College gave also two martyrs, Thomas Marshall, who took his doctor's degree in 1515, became the last abbot of Colchester and suffered for denying the royal supremacy in 1539, and Nicholas Garlick, the glorious Apostle of the Peak, who gave his life for the Faith at Derby in 1587.

Mention should also be made of the weakling Antony Kitchin, the only Catholic bishop who conformed to Elizabeth's new church and signed the act of supremacy. On the other hand he refused to have anything to do with the consecration of Matthew Parker, a very significant refusal, and so his defection was of little practical use to the Anglicans, although it had, in current jargon, a certain "propaganda value". From 1573 laymen were allowed by Stocke to live in the Hall. In 1572 George Blackwell, later arch-priest, was there, a man signally successful in baffling the Cecilian spies, one of whom complained to the old fox: "Their letter passeth by divers conveyances, and with such caution, as for my life I could never come to the intercepting of any of them, albeit I have used therein no small vigilance". Unhappily he took an oath of allegiance that was

[1] The present Worcester College is the Protestant refoundation of 1714.

expressly framed in James I's reign to entrap Catholics into unwary admissions, and in spite of the Holy See's condemnation, sent to him personally by St Robert Bellarmine. His stout opponent was another Gloucester Hall man, William Bishop, afterwards titular bishop of Chalcedon and first missionary bishop in England since the Reformation. During his brief episcopacy he did a great work for the Church in England.

Another Benedictine foundation was to play a notable part. In 1286 the monks of Durham sent scholars to Oxford. A few years later Durham College arose in the Broad and in 1330 the old chapel, now vanished, was ready, hallowed to " the honour and memory of the most Holy Trinity, the blessed Virgin Mary and the most glorious confessor St Cuthbert ". Dissolved in 1541, it passed through various hands, including the boy king's, until it was bought by Sir William Pope, who in 1554 refounded it as Trinity College, a name ever dear to Catholics for the sake of her dear son John Henry Newman.

Sir Thomas Pope is a good example of the good men who either did not see the issue clearly or had not the courage of martyrdom in Henry's days, but afterwards " made good " and atoned for their Henrician conformity. One may haply see a prophetic note in these words of St Thomas More, when he received from him the date of his beheading : " Quiet yourself, good Mr Pope, and be not discomforted ; for I trust that we shall one day in heaven see each other full merrily, where we shall be sure to live and love together in joyful bliss eternally." Cardinal Pole, an excellent judge of character, numbered him amongst his friends. Even Elizabeth admired his constancy. He died in the critical year 1559.

His college he dedicated " to the honour of the Holy and undivided Trinity, and the glory of Almighty God, the Most High Creator ; in satisfaction for his sins, and in thanksgiving for God's benefits ; for the increase of the orthodox and Christian religion, and to the perpetual maintenance of poor scholars ". The statutes, modelled on those of Corpus Christi College, founded by Richard Fox, bishop of Winchester, in 1516, are of great interest. They might even be deemed rigorous by our modern standards. All had to be present at daily Mass, on pain of losing their commons ; those who came late were to be deprived of dinner or of supper. Under severe penalties no member of the college was to consort with a heretic or suspected heretic, lest one infected member should destroy the flock.

This judgment from a man of Sir Thomas Pope's record and experience, a man nowise cruel or fanatical, is worth noting.

In Elizabeth's reign Trinity College sent forth a number of martyrs. Blessed Thomas Ford, chosen Fellow in 1565, was arrested with Blessed Edmund Campion at Lyford and suffered at Tyburn in 1582. From Trinity also came James Bell, who was martyred in 1584, Edward Burden (1588), Alexander Rawlins (1595), Robert Sutton (1587), William Spencer (1589) and Christopher Wharton (1600). Among the Trinity confessors were Richard Smith, successor of William Bishop as titular bishop of Chalcedon and Vicar Apostolic of Great Britain, who after a few years was obliged to fly the country and died in France in 1655, and Sir George Calvert, who became a Catholic in 1625 and founded, as Lord Baltimore, the colony of Maryland, on principles of religious toleration, " the first experiment in civil and religious liberty ", as it has been called.

St John's, the other Marian refoundation, which took the place of the Cistercian St Bernard's, has the ever-glorious memory of Blessed Edmund Campion, the most outstanding, it might be said, of the great and glorious band of Elizabethan martyrs. Among others who knew him at Oxford and testified to the charm and courtesy of his character was that same historian Camden, who made, in those *Annals of Britain* understood to have been seen and allowed by Gloriana herself, the remarkable admission that the Queen never really believed in the treason of the priests imputed to them by her statutes, but that it was deemed needful to show the papists' hopes of toleration to be vain. The plea of tyranny in all ages !

" and with necessity
The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds."

Campion's Oxford career is a study in itself, beginning in 1566 before the hopes of a Catholic restoration had grown faint. Another St John's man was the protomartyr of the seminaries, Blessed Cuthbert Mayne, who suffered at Launceston in 1577, while we must not forget the eminent scholar Dr Gregory Martin, one of those who helped in the foundation of the Venerabile.

Of the secular clergy's foundations, University College has been claimed as the first, and sprang from the benefactions of William of Durham, who died in 1249. It is doubtful however whether he left any definite instructions for the rearing of a college, whose statutes were only set forth in 1280. Its chief Catholic interest lies beyond our period, when Mass was openly

said in a chapel here in the reign of James II, and a group of gifted converts gathered round the first of them, the Master, Obadiah Walker.

Balliol College was due to a penance given by Walter Chirkham, bishop of Durham, to John de Balliol, lord of Barnard's Castle, who had ambushed, robbed and outrageously treated the prelate. As part of his satisfaction he was to give money to maintain for ever several poor scholars at Oxford, which he did. After his death his widow expanded the work into a permanent college ; its statutes date from 1282, although somewhat modified by Clement VI in 1343 and again by the founder of Corpus Christi in the first decade of the sixteenth century, and so remained until 1800, with serene disregard in practice of their very Catholic provisions. In the 1860's the old chapel was pulled down to make way for the contrivance of a certain Butterfield. In modern times known for its expulsion of " Ideal Ward " and for its " broadway sons of latitude " of the school of Jowett, Balliol played a noble part in resisting Tudor tyranny, alone daring to qualify Henry's claim to supremacy with the addition " as far as they might without prejudice to divine law and the orthodox faith ". Its Master, William Wryght, resigned, with several of the Fellows, rather than compromise with Elizabethan heresy. The life of Fr Parsons, its bursar, shows how imperfect was the Protestant ascendancy in the college in the 1570's. He left in 1573 to enter the Church and the Jesuit Order. By all accounts, of friend and foe, he was a very great convert and a very powerful influence.

The first college to function as a fully organised college for secular clerks dates from 1264. Its founder, Walter de Merton, of Merton in Surrey, was an exceptionally able layman. In 1258 he was made Chancellor of Henry III. After the King's defeat in the civil wars he had to resign, and thereupon devoted his wealth and talents to education. His twenty scholars were bound by his statutes to live in community like religious, only without vows ; they were to live frugally, content with bread and beer and one course of meat or fish a day, to talk Latin except at recreation, and so on. The history and monuments of Merton, its thirteenth century and mediaeval glass, its Edwardian library (1377—8, the oldest in England), are of special interest. Merton gave the Church one martyr, Blessed John Sugar, in 1604. In Elizabeth's reign the initial resistance to heresy was strong. Matthew Parker put aside their election of a

Catholic warden and intruded one John Manne, in 1562. One night when the college was gathered round the hall fire to sing hymns to Our Lady according to custom, one of the younger Fellows took up a metrical version of the Psalms (probably the doggerel of Sternhold and Hopkins), whereupon the sub-warden, Will Hawle, snatched the book from him, declaring that " neither he nor the rest would dance after his pipe ". This we learn from Antony Wood. And when the new warden found entrance by treachery within the gate, Hawle gave him a box on the ear. However tyranny prevailed and Hawle had to go. Afterwards Merton turned strongly Puritan. It should not be forgotten that Queen Catherine of Aragon was the guest of Merton when she came on pilgrimage to the shrine of St Frideswide in 1518.

Of all the colleges perhaps Exeter has the strongest ties with the Venerabile, for in the days of Elizabeth it was the nursing mother of Blessed Ralph Sherwin, our protomartyr, and of Blessed John Cornelius. It was the gift of Walter de Stapleton, bishop of the city of Exeter, beginning as a hall in 1314, especially for the benefit of westland students. Their life was notably austere. Wycliffism made a brief incursion in the heresiarch's lifetime, but it was as quickly rejected, and in the visitation of 1528—9, according to Strype, " were found " out of eighty " but four obedient subjects, all the rest were secret or open Roman affectionaries, and particularly one Savage of that house, a most earnest defender of the Pope's bull of excommunication of the Queen ".

Across Queen's Lane is the only survivor of the many halls of older Oxford, which bears the name of Oxford's great mediaeval saint, Edmund of Canterbury, who was born at nearby Abingdon, came to school in Oxford as a child, and took his vow of perpetual chastity in the church of St Mary the Virgin, the university church, placing a ring on the finger of Our Lady's image there and wearing its counterpart on his own. Few stories of the saints are so beautiful as his meeting with the Christ-child in the fields between Abingdon and Oxford. Who founded St Edmund's Hall is uncertain ; it is later than the saint's time. " Oxford University had arisen almost spontaneously . . . there were in St Edmund's time perhaps three thousand students. . . Certain it is that St Edmund was one of the first Masters of the Arts to lecture in an English university, as he was to be Oxford's first Doctor of Divinity. He was the first, too, to introduce the study of Aristotle's logic and the

scholastic method."[1] Oxford was surely cradled in holiness, as a town by St Frideswide, as an academy growing out of her schools by St Edmund.

New College was founded in 1379 by William of Wykeham and is of exceptional interest for many reasons. Architecturally it set the pattern for all later colleges, with its quadrangle (adapted from the monastic cloister), its naveless chapel, and its new perpendicular development of Gothic, a definitely English triumph following closely upon the great Decorated work of Henry Yevele. Merton, slowly completing its chapel, observing the excellence of Wykeham's work, abandoned the intended nave, and ranged its existing buildings into quadrangles. What Merton did for collegiate life, New did for the lay-out of the college, by setting the permanent pattern. Again, New College was intended especially to combat Lollardy, which owed its malign power more to Wycliff's anticlerical protector John of Gaunt than to the rancorous Socialist himself; much as Cranmer owed his influence mainly to Cromwell, the Boleyn tribe and Somerset. William Grocyn, that early teacher of St Thomas More and herald of the Christian Renaissance in England, was a Fellow of New in 1467. One of its wardens, John London, was a most infamous tool of Cromwell and Henry, but Elizabeth's agents found the college a stronghold of the old religion. To her belong the martyrs Blessed John Body (1583), John Slade (1583), as also Blessed John Munden (1582) who was forced to resign his fellowship and came to Rome from Rheims.

The Wycliff menace also led to the founding of " the Lincoln College of Blessed Mary and All Saints, in the University of Oxford " in 1427 by Richard Flemyng, bishop of Lincoln. This was another stronghold of Catholicism. In the college register we find a touching tribute to the late Queen and Cardinal in 1558, which seems to forebode the coming darkness. " In the month of November, A.D. 1558, died the Lady of most sacred memory, Mary Queen of England, and Reginald Pole, Cardinal and Archbishop of Canterbury." After the accession of " the matchless Eliza " Henshaw resigned the rectorship, making way for a crypto-Catholic, Francis Babington, who resigned for conscience' sake in 1565. As Vice-Chancellor he preached at the funeral of Amy Robsart, commending " this virtuous lady,

[1] Dom Maurice Bell, *St Edmund* (C.T.S.) p. 12. The last point is questioned by some. (Cf Fr C. B. Dawson S.J., *The Mirror of Oxford*, 1912, p. 129.)

so pitifully murdered", to the "memories" of his hearers. "After which", we learn without undue surprise, "he seems to have lived abroad." Lincoln gave us the martyrs Blessed William Filby (1582) and Blessed William Hart, besides the confessors John Gibbons and John Bridgwater, to whose joint labours we owe the *Concertatio Eccl. Cath. in Anglia* (1585), and William Gifford, later archbishop of Rheims, a reminder of the supranational character of the Church.

New College inspired William Waynflete, Wykehamist and later bishop of Winchester, to found Magdalen Hall in 1448 and the college of that name ten years after. Among its greatest sons were Wolsey and Pole, truly types of the reform-needing and the true reformer. This college witnessed the most Bolshevistic sacrileges of the Edwardian days, described with just indignation by the Anglican chronicler Antony Wood. "Thomas Bickley, a young man of Magdalen Coll., not dreading the Act of Parliament, presumed on Whitsunday, even in the middle of divine Service, to go to the High Altar there, and before the face of a great multitude, most irreverently to take away the Sacrament and to break it in pieces, to the great offence of many, whereof not a few were strangers that came at that time to hear divine Service." One wonders why no one thought of seizing the young fool, taking him outside and thrashing him within an inch of his life then and there. It would probably have cured him. In Henry's persecution Magdalen gave her martyrs Thomas Abel (1540) and Anthony Brookby (1537). In Mary's reign, Magdalen, which had received as guests Bucer, Peter Martyr and the blasphemer Coverdale, had in Owen Oglethorpe a zealously Catholic president. As bishop of Carlisle he, alone of the bishops, consented to crown the perjuring Elizabeth, but as Cardinal Allen tells us: "when he saw the issue of that matter, and both himself and the rest of his sacred order deprived, and the Church's holy laws and faith, against the conditions of her consecration and acceptation into that royal room violated, he sore repented himself all the days of his life, which were for that special cause both short and wearisome afterwards unto him". In Elizabethan days Magdalen went with the tide.

Brasenose College is singular as having grown very late (1509) out of a very early hall of the same name. Though founded by William Smyth, bishop of Lincoln, and Sir Richard Sutton, in zeal for the Catholic Faith, Brasenose was supine to

the persecutions, albeit four glorious martyrs came forth from her : Blessed Thomas Cottam, Blessed John Shert and Lawrence Johnson or Richardson in 1582, and Blessed William Marsden in 1586.

Richard Foxe, bishop of Winchester, who preceded his chaplain Wolsey in the royal favour, was one of the lights of the Catholic Renaissance. In 1516 he set up the college whose name betokens its inspiration, Corpus Christi. Special stress was laid on Greek ; this was the chief change. Pole was among its first Fellows ; another was John Foxe, the Goebbels of his day, truly a master of " propaganda ". Beneath the oriel window facing the street above the gateway remain the original carven angels supporting the chalice and Host. William Chedsey, the president, was thrown out by Elizabeth and died in prison for the Faith. Two more royal nominees followed ; all proved unsatisfactory. The college then elected Robert Harrison, who was deprived as pro-Catholic. From Corpus Christi came the Elizabethan martyr Blessed Thomas Plumtree (1570) and the Jacobean Blessed George Napier, of Holywell Manor, Oxford, martyred in 1610, a man gentle and winning as Blessed John Kemble seventy years after. The enemies of the Faith, dreading his popularity with all decent folk, took special pains to blot out his memory. Corpus Christi was the last college to start work in a still Catholic England.

The Oxford the martyrs knew retained her outward beauty at its height. On her fringes the abbeys of Oseney and Rewley lay in ruins, but within the walls the mark of the reforming claws was chiefly discerned in images defaced or broken and altars removed. Changed however beyond recognition were her religious acts and observances. Only in secret could the Faith and worship of Christendom be practised.

Born in the true renaissance of the twelfth century, in the forefront of the splendours of the thirteenth, when her name stood exalted through Christendom, steadily resisting the subversive heresy and revolutionary disorders of Wycliff and his following, sharing in the new zeal and true reforms associated with such names as Grocyn, Linacre, More, the Catholic not the pagan Renaissance, Oxford at last was overborne and beaten, but not without many a brave rearguard battle. The imported heresies of the sixteenth century, by perjury and violence, gained possession of her mighty heritage.

Her truest sons, by the admission of candid Protestant writers such as Gladstone, George Brodrick (Warden of Merton) and especially Antony Wood (who wrote within a century of the riotous changes), fled overseas, and her true spirit is to be looked for neither in Laudian nor cavalier, but in those homes of true study which received her most faithful exiled children, in Louvain, Douai, Rheims, and above all (may we not justly say ?) in Rome, at the Venerabile, where the scholars whom Oxford no longer sheltered were trained for combat in the wars of Heaven's King, and in due time declared among the blessed citizens of Heaven. Not only did they shed their blood for Christ, but in their brief most glorious course they instructed many unto justice and,

> " by the Church's pondering art
> Late set and marked upon the chart
> Of her divine astronomy ",

they shine as the stars for ever and ever. Their birthland drifts from a hazy nationalism coloured by Christian sentiment into the whirlpools of godless revolution. But the end is not yet. Under God the Martyrs are our hope that the dry bones shall yet live and the desolate places once more rejoice.

H. E. G. Rope.

# PERIPATETICS ABROAD

Our going out lacked circumstance. There was, certainly, a cluster of plain-spoken men around the door, frankly criticizing our costume and marvelling that we should attempt to spend ten days in one another's company and then call it a holiday. But that was all. And it seemed enough, for there was nothing about our party or our plans that called for demonstration. We were no wealthy sybarites, bound for the fleshly pleasures of the Cocumella ; nor were we doggedly athletic, our intended path littered with unscaleable mountains and unfordable rivers. We did not even propose to fry onions on barren heights. True, my sack was already ominously bulky with a primus-stove, for the purpose of making tea, but I realize that this shall not be reputed to me unto justice.

Convention demands that an article on gitas begin with a sweeping declaration of unworthiness, almost Oriental in tone. Possibly this was first adopted by some giant of the Golden Age who, setting his compass for the islands of the Aegean, found himself even farther East than he had intended. Nevertheless, I write with no feeling of inferiority to the men who spent their youth leaping from crag to crag, or washing down zuppa inglese with litres of lacrima Christi. Nor have I any foreboding that this may be the article to end gita-articles. If it is, I shall be well pleased, since it is always satisfying to have the last word on any subject. But I do not think it will work out that way. My wish is not to add to the accounts of special forms of gita, the analysis of the concept gita, the tabulation of objections (so we may, I think, describe *Through Darkest Italy*[1]), and the defence of that curious anomaly, the

[1] THE VENERABILE Vol. X, No. 3.

English gita ; with these statements by masters in Israel I can but respectfully agree. My own contribution is empirical, to complete the authoritative theory already laid down ; it is concerned with ten days spent by nine philosophers in the Abruzzi and is an attempt to pick out salient features of that gita in illustration of what a gita can be, if it is good, and what it must be, if it is to rank as a gita at all. Conclusions upon the worth of mountain gitas, English gitas and trat crawls (for which, I hasten to add, I have the profoundest sympathy) I leave to be drawn by the unbiased reader.

The first requirement, then, is good company. That we always had, I know, but my connotation of the term was extended to bursting point by the additions it received during those ten days in the month of the Munich crisis. The afternoon we entertained the station staff at Cisterna Romana with harmonized *canzoni inglesi*, the evening we sang negro spirituals at Monte Cassino (no, we were neither Romantic nor Classical in spirit), the amiability with which we risked life and limb at nightfall on the way to Picinisco, slithering down a treacherous mountain that we should never have climbed at all, these instructed us in depths of meaning in the term " good company " which we had never suspected.

Moreover, our band contained a number of " characters ". These are by no means essential and may even ruin the whole venture, if they are sufficiently eccentric, refusing to speak except in English, treating every Italian as a potential criminal or over-rating the importance of dry sheets. Such men have existed but they had no part with us. There was the Man who Talked in Slogans. His conversation was rather like an Advertisers' Gazette, but he was soon finished, he never resented fun at his expense and at times his brevity became actually witty. The Man who Grumbled did much to lighten our more trying situations. He was always prophesying disaster, and when it came it was never the one he had prophesied. This so delighted us that present disaster lost much of its sting. The Top Year man who came with us as Symbol of Authority and Official Pathfinder never knew where any path went and never noticed any notable landmark. By the time each member of the party had concocted a suitable witticism at his expense we had usually recovered our bearings. Not to be ignored was the Largest Representative, who carried an enormous rucksack holding tinned meat, cream cheese, biscuits, chocolate, vermouth and

peppermints. The day we were separated and hopelessly lost on the way from Pescasserole to Scanno, I was fortunate enough to be walking with him. Between four of us we had not only his private canteen but provisions for the whole party, with the exception of the vino and some huge campagna loaves of the size and consistency of mill-stones. We were so buoyed up by this happy dispensation of providence that the water situation hardly troubled us. We had one small cinzano bottle of water between us and we had to postpone our meal until we could supplement this, which was not until late in the afternoon, at an abandoned sheep-trough.

Everybody noticed how everybody else "opened out" at the Villa, and the unfolding was accelerated during gitas. This was largely due to the sense of sudden freedom, which also tended to gild the most trivial incidents with immortality. To one who had not known the Gregorian in June or the *sveglia* on an August afternoon even Picinisco might make less appeal, while Ovindoli would probably appear quite obnoxious. The process was completed by the atmosphere of fantasy through which every gita path rambled ; and that in turn owed no little of its effect to the problem of language. Our stay at Ovindoli was a case in point. I entered it, tired and blistered, after dark and walked into a cow. The cow was ruminating over a refuse heap in the middle of the road and, as I saw its horns, I thought it was the devil. Closer acquaintance with Ovindoli convinced me that it might well have been. I was, in fact, disposed to be critical of its filthy streets and filthier inhabitants, whose manners were uglier than their faces ; of the church where everything was done with the minimum of respect ; of Mrs Finke whose cooking did not justify its reputation. But Mrs Finke herself stood above criticism. She was an elderly and vivacious Swede, with a shaggy mane of greying hair and a number of gold teeth which twinkled as she talked like a neon advertisement for beer. She spoke to us in the languorous accents of Garbo, interjecting abuse of the maid in Swedish, coquettish pleasantries to the Count in Italian, and cooing confidences to the Ethereal Lady in French. These two were the other visitors at the Casa Finke and might have stepped straight from a novel by Phillips Oppenheim. We all dined in the same small room and Mrs Finke's efforts to project polyglot small talk through our barrage of chatter in the middle of the room to the corners occupied by her other queer guests would have done credit to

a prima donna. In such circumstances the toughness of the chops seemed irrelevant.

Picinisco offers variations on the linguistic theme. The first bar I entered belonged to a lady with a beautiful Edinburgh accent ; the paper shop was kept by a man who spoke Cockney and kept all the more famous English dailies ; and as we left the town for Pescasserole we met an old man from Dunoon, who was anxious to return there as soon as possible. Just as Pescasserole came in sight we passed a woodcutter who sang out to me " Hallo redhead ". He looked like an Irishman but was in fact an Italian from America. And to philosophers of Second Year talking Italian still has a novelty which lends profundity to the most banal conversational currency. The phrase " talking Italian " might suggest a fairly uniform operation ; but the woman with the waterpot near Cisterna could make nothing of my cultured Tuscan and after a long effort to satisfy her curiosity about our past history and future plans I was annoyed to hear her explaining to friends that we were English and could speak no Italian. On our way to Picinisco we had great difficulty in obtaining directions. Nobody could believe that we really wanted to go to Picinisco and concluded that, owing to our poor Italian, they had misunderstood the question. They then gave the answer to every question that they thought we *might* be asking ; when the *status quaestionis* was finally settled we then had to pass a rigorous examination beginning with the incredulous query " Vanno a Picinisco ? Perchè ? "

This curiosity was part of the desire to be helpful which frequently led our questioners to offer many unwanted or impracticable alternative plans ; or to give us the information which they thought would be most acceptable regardless of its validity. So we became hopelessly lost on several occasions and the only reason we ever arrived at Scanno at all was that throughout the day we met only two goatherds, and even they told us what was little better than a deliberate lie about the nearest water supply. They said it was about half an hour's distance, whereas it took us over two hours running most of the way down hill to reach it.

Yet there is something to be said for thus tempering the cold wind of truth to the shorn victims of adversity ; and sometimes to travel hopefully is the only way to arrive. In this manner they communicated to us some of their native optimism. To this quality must be attributed the boast of the taxi-man

at Albano on our first day that he could pack the nine of us, ruck sacks, primus-stove and all, into one small car. He had even, he informed us in a fine flight of imagination, got as many as sixteen in before now. Our Largest Representative drew as many as possible of his fourteen stone into his chest and, in an unusual linguistic spasm, replied, " Non di questo tipo ". His rosy outlook momentarily discoloured by the grey light of truth, the man withdrew. At Formia we stared at the hotel and then fled from the luxurious haunts of modern civilization to the comfortless hovels of a small-scale profiteer. This fat rascal displayed a misleading optimism over the quality of his *rosbif* which was tough as leather and tasted less pleasant, and of the beds he could offer us in one of his houses (which were overcrowded slums).

Another incident illustrates the Italian desire to offer purely theoretical solutions to practical difficulties ; and will indicate also what I mean by the unexpected as a further ingredient of the gita. We were resting by a river, miles from any house, surrounded by tall mountains. . Suddenly round a bend in the mule-track came a young priest seated on a mule, thick woollen underwear protruding inelegantly beneath his cassock. Beside him walked a fresh-faced lad in an ill-fitting new suit, the boy's father, carrying several shiny suitcases, and the boy's uncle, whose jaunty trilby and cigarette-holder spoke of the American episode in his life. Trilby-hat doubted the wisdom of anyone's visiting Picinisco ever but, if we must go, he suggested a carriage. How we could get a carriage in that isolated spot or drive it up the narrow mule-path ahead were problems too elementary to merit solution. But in fact the proposal was only less fantastic than the arrival of such a party at all in such a place. When we arrived at Avezzano, the one town of which our Pathfinder had no experience and to which we had no kind of introduction, the first person we met was the parish priest, who proved to be an old acquaintance from our previous day's train journey to Celano. Another unexpected but happy turn of events took us to Scanno for the feast of their local patron, S. Eustachio, in whose honour we avoided the Ember fast of that day.

This was a great occasion for the display of local costume and musical talent and formed part of an unobtrusive ecclesiastical motif which ran through this gita. We were at Monte Cassino for the feast of the famous Abbot Desiderio, Pope Victor III, and at Avezzano for the local *festa* of Our Lady of Victories.

At Picinisco we offered our services as choir for the first High Mass of a new priest (it seemed at one point as though we should have to force our services upon the reluctant *parocco*, but he realized his good fortune in time to safeguard our modesty). At Formia we marvelled at the choir which lent somewhat faded splendour to the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross—one priest playing an asthmatical harmonium. The celebrant was so crippled that he could neither genuflect nor kiss the altar but nobody seemed to notice anything amiss. At Ovindoli a sacristan with the voice of a soul in torment gave a rendering of the Mass for the Dead unknown to any liturgist. This was not primarily a bricking gita and I leave it to one more learned to hymn the praises of the mosaics of Monte Cassino and the standard of Don John of Austria preserved at Gaeta cathedral. But you could hardly move in Italy without meeting some link with the past, historical or artistic. They are, then, part and parcel of any gita, helping you to march in step with the past even though your goal be in the future. The gita which lacks entirely such influences has not grown to the full stature of which a gita is capable.

I have often been accused, and by those who should know better, of lacking appreciation for the splendours of nature. This is unjust. The gita which offers to the aesthetic sense nothing more sublime than a well-filled plate is all very well in its way but it has failed to stir the depths of human emotion. If I hint at, rather than detail, the beauties of our journey, that is because it needs a literary genius to put into words the impressions of vastness and of colour which came to us across the peaks of the Giaccerella or of Monte Bianco. The sight which lives most vividly in my memory was sunrise at Monte Cassino. Clouds filled the valley and swirled around the foot of the monastery, white and grey and in the distance taking on all the colours of the rising sun. We were completely cut off from the world beneath and our eyes were directed to the clear sky above—a very suitable preparation for meditation.

The connection between suffering and triumph may be hard to analyse but that it exists there can be no doubt. Not least is this true of the discomfort attached to a walking gita and the lustre that it adds in retrospect. For that matter, even the epicure at Bracchiano has been known to groan uneasily upon his couch in the small hours of the siesta ; and for him the sting is in the tail. But the pain of a blistered foot is eased by the

thought of what a good story this will make when you have had a bath and put on a clean pair of socks. Two days later you are convinced that these were the best hours of your life. Discomfort elevates the most ordinary itinerary and gives a positively epic quality when it is bound up with the struggle against unruly Nature. To be lost in the Rocca woods or be forced to race up the lakeside for rosary brought its full mead of reminiscence after supper ; but to be lost among nameless mountains, to be threatened by nightfall with a solitary dissolution on a disused goat-path, is to be offered deathless, if self-sung fame. Yet these intimations of immortality are not inconsistent with a good deal of discomfort and shortness of temper. Where we scored was that at all times our good spirits were fortified against the ill-timed jests of fate by good wine. Life in Italy is often seen through a golden haze, the colour not of morning mists over the Campagna nor of the atmosphere of the Morals Aula but of a glass of *vino bianco*. Wine sharpened yet more finely the keenest intellect and gave edge to the dullest wits. Wine moved the taciturn to speech and made the loquacious worth hearing. Wine imparted the final distinction to the best planned celebration and rescued the mediocre from disgrace. On gitas also, wine induced the satisfaction of repletion when the fare was sparse, it lent wings to the feet when the road was long and rocky, it summoned up laughter when the antics of fate demanded a groan. The glowing memory of the last glass or the eager anticipation of the next was a sure solvent of present gloom. It caused a feeling of physical well-being which put the seal of success on all our undertakings. A teetotal gita is as unthinkable as a prayerless pilgrimage or a flagless *festa*. Rum-punch is a noble drink, and they make it nobly at Picinisco. Even tea will refresh the weary and create a pleasing state of gentle melancholy. Beer, I am told, has its uses but it is rare today and its sluggish substitute gives me no cheer. But all these at best are only second best and so we treated them. Our day was divided by draughts from wicker-covered bottles and ended in satisfaction, for it was reviewed through the bottom of an emptied glass.

This is a solemn memory and I would leave you to it, stealing softly away not to disturb your meditation. I ask only one question : if this be the stuff from which gitas are made, can a gita be had on Lancashire fells, on Alpine peaks or in suburbican convents ?

JOHN PLEDGER.

# NEWS FROM ROME

During September I received two letters about the College in Rome and the Villa, one from MGR CARROLL-ABBING and the other from Commendatore Freddi. The former, writing on August 12th, says: " . . . The College building is quite ready and with a couple of weeks' notice could be put in perfect order. Actually I am using the first floor for my offices (Pontifical Relief Commission, Italian Medical Commission, American Relief for Italy, Street-Boy Committee, etc.). As I have separate premises for all these activities, however, in Piazza Cairoli, Via Lucullo and Via Veneto, and these are only co-ordinating offices for my own convenience, they could be transferred within twenty-four hours without any difficulty. In the meantime they will prevent any attempt at requisitioning the building for houseless people or for refugees. *The general expenses of the College and the servants' wages have thus been eliminated.*

" Palazzola is now in order once again: it has been thoroughly cleaned and the furniture has been gathered together again from Castel Gandolfo and Rome.

" We are all looking forward to the day when the students will be able to come back and the old building in Via Monserrato reassume its true function. The chapel is strangely lifeless, especially now that the hospital has gone away as well. . ."

Then, on August 30th, COMM. FREDDI writes: " . . . Ho consentito che fino all'epoca della riapertura del Collegio, le Suore già al servizio dell'Ospedale possano dimorare nell' appartamento delle loro consorelle del Collegio, a poichè fanno tutte vita in commune, la spesa mantenimento Suore a carico del Collegio non è molto gravosa e ad ogni modo assai inferiore di quella che si dovrà sostenere dopo l'esodo delle Suore ex Ospedalieri. . .

" Ho preso l'occasione, dalla rimessa in loco dei mobili delle stanze degli alunni, per fare eseguire dal falegname Prospero le più urgenti riparazioni al vecchio mobilio del Collegio. . .

" A Palazzolo oltre la riparazione ai tetti, di cui già Le scrissi, sono stati eseguiti i seguenti lavori : . . . infissi nelle stanze . . . impianto idraulico . . . imbiancature delle pareti . . . ripassatura a cera di tutte le bancate della Chiesa . . . macchina di cucina . . . vetri mancanti. . .

" I lavori, che sono stati condotti sotto la direzione dello Ing. Sneider, dato l'enorme costo della mano d'opera, importeranno a liquidazione dei conti circa 150,000 lire.

" Con i detti lavori, che avevano carattere di urgenza ad evitare ulteriori danni per infiltrazioni della pioggia ed altro, il Convento di Palazzolo non ha più l'aspetto di una casa rovinata e abbandonata in zona di guerra ed è restituita alla condizione di abitabilità.

" L'Eminentissimo Cardinal Pizzardo, in vista dell'incombente pericolo che il Convento, se disabitato, venisse occupato dagli sfollati dei Castelli Romani, ha desiderato che vi prendessero dimora estiva : le famiglie di due funzionari del Vaticano, che per necessità di servizio non potevano recarsi troppo lontano da Roma, nonchè otto sacerdoti spagnoli. Così nella bella Chiesa di Palazzola hanno nuovamente riecheggiato i canti della Sacra Liturgia.

" I danni di guerra secondo la valutazione dell'Ingegnere ammontano per quanto riguarda l'immobile a circa 900,000 lire ; per quanto riguarda il terreno, le chiusure ecc. a circa 300,000 lire ; per i mobili mancanti circa L. 1,400,000.

" Le relative perizie sono state presentate agli uffici competenti ed ora si attende il risponso del Genio Civile e dell'Intendenza di Finanza, anche per conoscere il contributo che verrà concesso dallo Stato.

" Naturalmente fino a che non conosceremo l'ammontare di tale contributo, nulla potrà essere deciso in relazione all' esecuzione dei lavori."

The latest development concerning Rome is that, on October 26th, I agreed to CARDINAL PIZZARDO's request (forwarded to me by the Apostolic Delegate) that " alcuni sacerdoti e studenti universitari " might be allowed to occupy rooms at the Venerabile. This I have done on the strict understanding that all rooms shall be restored to us on our return from England, and that in the meantime due compensation be made.

JOHN MACMILLAN.

# COLLEGE DIARY

It required an effort to turn the mind away from the Zweiquellen-hypothesis' views on bohairic interpolations in the Apocalypse and concentrate on more trivial matters, but the Editor looked very determined. The fact that hundreds of fellows had done it before did little to console us, and when he produced seventeen back numbers of THE VENERABILE from out of his cassock and dropped them on the table with a " You can just look through these and get the general idea " we murmured something about kismet and so here we are, Roman diarist for the year 1945.

FEBRUARY 12th *Monday*. We are quite aware that it is not in the best tradition to begin on a querulous note, but we feel that we have a just cause. At the best of times Monday is not a good day for starting a diary. Tuesday perhaps, and by Wednesday or Thursday one can begin to look back with some sort of sense of achievement for the week is nearly over. But Monday, no. The week hasn't even properly begun—it stretches before you, a vast expanse of emptiness, *tohu va bohu*, and what you will. A rainy Monday is worse still but a Monday on which a gita has been called off is execrable. This together with the prospect of Lent in the offing made our thoughts somewhat sombre. But fortunately for all of us this state of affairs was not to last long for an effort was made in the afternoon to shake up our humour and a play reading of *Twelfth Night* was given in the Common Room. Many professional stages make the mistake of taking their Shakespearean clowns too seriously, but not so ours. An " Itma " Aguecheek and a Feste who was apparently born within a few yards of Bow Bells dispelled the gloom and we were looking forward with a less jaundiced eye to the entertainment provided for the evening—a game of " murder "—when the unexpected happened. Someone came across Fr Christie S.J. at Stonyhurst and put the Literary Society on his tracks. The result was : no murder, early supper and " The Truth about Leeds ". We were relieved to find that many of the unbelievable stories we had heard were not true, indeed the only incredible thing of the evening was the vote of thanks when the proposer for some reason best known to himself kept

on addressing the wrong speaker despite the frequent corrections of the chairman.

13th *Shrove Tuesday*. After seeing the Stonyhurst production of *The Admirable Crichton* we returned home and were greeted in the Common Room by the agents of Shrewsbury's Fairy Godmother. They shared out the gifts to those who rang the bell with the correct answers to their questions. A consolation prize was given to the First Year man who thought Lot's wife was called Mrs Lot.

14th *Ash Wednesday*. "Ashes will be received on the tonsure procedamus." It seems a pity that the full tonsure is not kept in England, for although it made it look as though you were recovering from ringworm, it did nevertheless distinguish you from the lesser breeds. As it was, the celebrant had to make a rough guess at the target and as usual the ash dribbled down our neck. A word of sympathy for the untonsured First Year man who had to receive it on his forehead and who looked like Cain for the rest of the day.

The College Bounty was distributed during supper since

15th *Thursday* was the day of the postponed gita.

On the way back we found a battle school in progress : we tied a handkerchief to our stick, crossed our fingers, closed our eyes and walked on. Tea (Lancashire style) was ordered at the Three Fishes, where a young six-year-old, with protruding teeth, offered to entertain us on the piano and proceeded to give us a remarkable version of *Tiger Rag*. We applauded hugely and attacked the eggs and bacon. It was only after we had finished that we discovered we had eaten the tea of a party who had gone out to look for snowdrops.

17th *Saturday*. We have always maintained that our harmonium was an instrument of great possibilities. For instance, we have known it give quite a reasonable rendering of the *Armonia Religiosa*, complete with silver trumpets. When occasion demanded the organist has even managed to convey the impression of a brass band. But tonight's performance far surpassed all others. Our organist was acolyte and the junior substitute took over. Perhaps he found a secret stop, perhaps he has Scotch blood in him, but we could have sworn bagpipes were playing at the bottom of the Chapel. A most interesting experience, though a trifle monotonous on the Litany.

18th *Sunday* and the First in Lent. In a misguided moment of enthusiasm last night (spag can catch you that way sometimes) we put our name down for rugger today hoping that the new pitch, spoken of so highly by our experts, would not have a ridge running down the middle. However, we need not have worried, for any distinguishing marks it may have had were completely washed out, and after forty minutes or so of the game, we wondered if we looked as battered as the rest of the scrum, who bore the air of men who had been passed through the wringer. Later, as we scraped the mud from our wishbone, we realised how little a mere bath would be able to effect.

19th *Monday*. The *Novelli Sacerdoti* returned and by way of welcome at supper an interesting how-d'ye-do. The Senior Student started grace, but after the *Benedicite* remembered it was Lent and stopped. Someone on the other side thought he'd give a hand and chimed in with the *Edent Pauperes*. We didn't wish to argue with him so we answered. Then he too remembered and stopped. We began to see the endless possibilities of this game as someone next to him started off with the *Gloria Patri*; why, we could work right down to First Year, as long as each one didn't say too much of the grace before he remembered it was Lent. It was getting to our turn and we were just going to start on the *Kyrie* when the Rector rang the bell. There was a loud *Prosit* from someone on the bottom table, opening up even more possibilities. But apparently everyone was getting tired of it and there was a general movement towards the chairs.

20th *Tuesday*. Kissing of the New Priests' hands and *Te Deum* at 9.30 p.m.

24th *Saturday*. I wonder if the Middle Ages scholar who wrote these lines was having a prophetic view of black puddings. Or perhaps they already had them then. Anyway, here it is :—

Caro mortem inferens,
Performidinosa ;
Alimentum putridum,
Esca gelidosa ;
Cibus turpis, obscoenus,
σαρξ ridiculosa,
Adhaerens visceribus
Manu frigidosa.

25th *Sunday*. And having gone to a great deal of trouble learning it off by heart, we were about to recite it at the breakfast table—the one morning for weeks on which we had something articulate to say—when it dawned on us that the silence in the Refectory was rather more marked than usual and that it was a Recollection Day. We shall probably have forgotten it by tomorrow.

Tonight Miss Deanna Durbin entertained us in the theatre, " *Tres Puellae Facetae Crescunt* " as the notice put it. " Ingressus " it continued, " per aulas viridas faciendus." This because the electricians, cheerfully believing that if they shift their scene of operations often enough they will eventually hit on THE right place, had barricaded the theatre door and bivouacked on top of a ricketty structure behind it. We are still hoping that one day they will let themselves go, knock a hole through one of the Three Little Maids from School that are on the back wall of the theatre, and project from the gardening room. It would be an interesting experiment, and the little maid on the right could do with a bit of face-lifting. But, to get back to the film. We were a little mystified by the whole thing. The smoke haze in the theatre may have accounted for the indistinctness, and the bad sound-track may have explained why we missed several vital clues, but all the same we knitted the brow rather more than usual when the bridegroom married the bride's sister, and the bride was led off to

someone we couldn't see outside the front door—and all the while Miss Durbin was singing " Because." Since everyone else in the film was looking mystified too, perhaps we weren't so stupid after all.

27th *Tuesday*. First and Second Year Theology spent a worrying afternoon in a Canon Law exam and we sat through tea amid a bewildering crossfire of quasi-domiciles and substituted vicars.

28th *Wednesday*. In the Refectory Scott is still going South, and today's instalment told us of the poor ponies the expedition had to kill for food. We stabbed at our sausage and sympathised.

MARCH 2nd *Friday*. *Feast of St Chad*. There is a hymn to St Chad in the Sarum Breviary which is of more than passing interest.

Engaged in prayer he still would stand
In icy water cold,
Yet never would indulge in those,
That warmth and comfort hold.

It led to a custom known as " Chad-bathing " and seems to have been the forerunner of the modern cold tub. This ought to cheer those who steal down in the small hours to have their bath.

3rd *Saturday*. Only a fortnight to the Opera now, and things are certainly warming up. There is a notice on the Green-room door : "Danger. Men at work " and peeping behind I saw three unrecognisable human beings hurling paint on to a huge back-scene which, I am told, is made up of twenty-three and a half blackout curtains. Meanwhile, in the theatre, eight members of the scrum were trying very hard to look like a bevy of beautiful maidens and performing an incredible fandango in time to a piano which looked dangerously like catching fire under the strain. The instructions have been nailed up on to the wall, and I stayed long enough to take down an extract :—

" At C (bottom 28) 3456 skip FORW holding hands, back again on climb the hardy little lasses. At D dance round in fours for four bars, reverse for four and a half bars, throw hands up on the wrump, break into twos [!] and talk. As soon as you've finished singing, 3456 turn round, hold hands of 1278 respectively, 1278 turn 3456 for two bars, 1278 bow while 3456 curtsey for two bars. Up immediately and go to L [?] Hail it as second line 33. Return for four bars, swing to L for four bars, then at though it perish 3456 swing left, 78 come down to tag on to 6, 12 across to 3. Position at M should be 12345678."

It finishes off with a cryptic " auguri ". I hope they know what it all means.

4th *Sunday*. The Public Purse Balance Sheet and the list of new Public Offices were both issued today. With regard to the first, we were slightly worried by one entry : " Part residue of kale given out with potatoe (sic) money, remainder to free tabs 14s.", which didn't seem to make sense ; and with regard to the second we noticed that we had won a bet we took on three years ago when we had marked out a First Year man as a coming M.C.

In the afternoon we convened in the Common Room to listen to the Sir Henry Wood Anniversary Concert. Three orchestras were playing, and to celebrate the occasion we had three wirelesses. In spite of the valiant struggles of the electricians, none of the three wirelesses worked properly, and reception varied between a low gurgle and a piercing shriek. However we sat it out, since there was smoking for the whole afternoon. During the interval the electricians decided that it really wasn't worth while staying, and they went to hear the rest of the programme in comfort in Fr Ekbery's room.

5th *Monday*. *Prosit* to Mr Swaby who took over the office of Senior Student today. A dreary first day of the public meeting, with elections for the Soccer, Rugger and Sketch Committees, but we ended up on a promise of more exciting things for the morrow.

6th *Tuesday*. One public-spirited man saved us the bother of voting by volunteering to take on the jobs of Head Housecleaner, Blackout Man and A.R.P. Warden. He must have some inside information on the end of the war and the return to Rome.

7th *Wednesday*. *St Thomas Aquinas*. *Festa nel cuore, festa nel refettorio* and an excellent one it was too. To dinner Frs van de Poel and Hughes S.J. and Messrs Kelly, Sowerby, Campbell, Buxton, Groarke and Clark. We had barely recovered from the gargantuan feast when the bell rang for tea ; and it was no ordinary tea. It was what was known in Rome as an " English Tea." Now an English Tea in Rome was something to dream of weeks beforehand and to remember for months after. When your usual fare is bread and heavy water, the prospect of real tea, of bread and butter, jam, cake and fancies has a surprising effect on the constitution, before, during and after. But when you have real tea every day, when you have butter every day, when you have jam and cake at least once a week ; in short, when you have an English tea, however *quasi*, every day of the week, the senses seem to get rather dull. I will not say we did not appreciate the banquet offered us today, but at the same time I thought there was lacking that atmosphere which I can still remember of my first English Tea in Rome, when some of us were still eating an hour and a quarter after the word " go ". All the same, Dr Dias, who came to tea, must have been rather surprised when Dr Butterfield told him that " this is how we usually feed the students ".

9th *Friday*. Vongola Peter has sent us his ordination card. It is written in Telugu, and looks even more meaningless than Hebrew. No one has yet offered to interpret it for me.

*Auguri* to Coconut Paul who now takes over the job at £20 per annum.

12th *Monday*. *San Gregorio* and to keep up tradition some brave souls went over to Stonyhurst after High Mass to have a " tank ".

13th *Tuesday*. Today a surprise awaited us in the Refectory, for we played our annual game of " all change " and we found ourselves sitting opposite the man who seems to think that the sugar-bowl is endowed with the same qualities as the widow's oil-cruse,

Tonight Admiral Evans decided that he had enough of the Pole and called it a day,

14th *Wednesday* and today we started on a rather more pleasant journey South, to Rome, in the company of Mr Belloc.

The Blandyke Concert given at Stonyhurst tonight was the best we have seen for a long time. As one of our Irish brethren put it to someone who didn't go : " If you'd have been there, you'd have been sorry to have missed it."

15th *Thursday*. The " Props " men departed for Blackburn this afternoon and returned later, laden down with heavy baggage and wearing police helmets. Rumour has it that tomorrow they are going down to Penzance to see if they can find any pirate costumes.

16th *Friday*. If the story is true the " Props " men must be masters in the art of persuasion. Someone who was in Blackburn today affirms that all the policemen are going about in sports jackets and bowler hats. However, when one of the Philosophers fainted in the confessional this evening, I began to wonder. I believe Fr van de Poel holds rather strict views on mental reservation.

To supper Fr H. Lavery.

17th *Saturday*. " It's a great day for the Irish "—but I'm afraid St Patrick was rather lost in the scramble and scurry of last minute arrangements for the Opera. Apparently my opinion about the Opera does not count very much, but before the critic takes over I should like to say that I thought the . . . sorry, he's here.

## THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

or

*The Slave of Duty*

*by W. S. Gilbert and A. Sullivan*

(by kind permission of R. D'Oyly Carte)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Major General Stanley* | | Mr Richards |
| *The Pirate King* | | Mr Clark |
| *Samuel, his Lieutenant* | | Mr Peters |
| *Frederic, the Pirate Apprentice* | | Mr O'Hara |
| *Sergeant of Police* | | Mr Kelly |
| *Mabel* | *General Stanley's Daughters* | Mr Buxton |
| *Edith* | | Mr J. Groarke |
| *Kate* | | Mr Campbell |
| *Isabel* | | Mr Tyler |
| *Ruth, a Pirate Maid of All Work* | | Mr Williams |
| *Chorus of Pirates* | | Messrs Sowerby, Farrow, Crissell, Hamilton, Dixon, Spillane |
| *Chorus of Police* | | Messrs Sowerby, Barry, Hamilton, Haughey, Lowery |
| *Chorus of General Stanley's Daughters* | | Messrs Swaby, Anglim, Gallagher, Derbyshire, Tierney |

*Act I:* A Rocky Sea-Shore on the Coast of Cornwall
*Act II:* A Ruined Chapel by Moonlight

The Opera produced by Mr Richards
Musical Director: Mr Scantlebury

Orchestra led by Fr Ekbery
Messrs Shelton, Alexander, Walmsley (*violin*); Johnson (*violoncello*); Frost (*flute*); McDonnell (*pianoforte*)

| | |
|---|---|
| *Stage Management* . . . . | Messrs Dixon, O'Dowd |
| *Scenery* . . . | Messrs Stewart, Balnaves, Conway |
| *Lighting* . . . . | Messrs Barry, Peters, Haughey |
| *Properties* . . . | Messrs Richards, Peters, Derbyshire |
| *Make-up* . . . . | Messrs Richards, Tyler, Peters |

Police Uniforms by courtesy of Blackburn and Clitheroe Constabularies.

This, we are told, is the century of the common man, and it is as a commoner that we give our appraisal of the Opera. Unlike more professional commentators we cannot recall in detail the merits and failings of former productions, casually refer to the choruses of '35 or the costumes of '28, much less take as a yardstick of excellence the professional performances of the D'Oyly Carte. For we are no Savoyard; nor even a past Venerabile player, Green-room man, or wine-distributor. Our contribution to this side of Roman life was purely passive; we were a consumer. We speak then as a back-bencher, as one who has always enjoyed the Opera uncritically, who has never (well, hardly ever!) noticed occasional goings flat or goings wrong and who remembers with admiration akin to despair, the critic who traced the decline and fall of Phoebe's dress through several generations. For us such minutiae have never mattered.

However, the back-bencher is now a person of some importance, for the smaller numbers of the House place him in almost a minority. No longer can he be referred to gregariously as one of the οἱ πόλλοι; that may well be the players' fate. We were pleased to see a larger orchestra than we ourselves knew, though built on the same solid foundation; and the noblesse of the Pirate King who, in full array, stepped in for the overture, we appreciated as an endearing Venerabile gesture. The audience was quite large, a blend of clerici, seculares, regulares, et moniales. Cider and *biscotti* bade us abundant welcome; programmes were elegantly done, and for the first time in our history, our chair was reserved. A student (or superior) might have suspected a trap, so perfect were the details of introduction.

The overture went with a swing (old sense), and at times with a bang, when an apparition from behind the piano would rise at unexpected moments, brandish two cymbals and then bring them together with a resounding clang; he would then return to *sheol* with equal suddenness. It is a good overture and had fairly set the mood of the opera, when the curtain rose on the "Pour O Pour" of the pirates in a wonderful Cornish setting; the props had done their work brilliantly. Though few in number the pirates sang with great volume and gusto, and were men of true piratical

quality. The succeeding dialogue unfortunately detracts from the brisk opening, and sets the odd plot with as little grace as a ponderous *status quaestionis* introducing an obscure thesis. But much was regained by the singing; the Pirate King sang his introduction with regal vigour, and Frederic and Ruth partnered each other perfectly in both song and gesture. Yet we felt the Opera was slow in opening, a defect, if we remember aright, not peculiar to *The Pirates*.

Frederic's line introducing the girls was as fulsome as a theatre blurb, and might have dismayed many a Green-room; yet the chorus lived up to it. The girls have always been an inexhaustible source of wonder for this spectator. We have ever been overcome by the elegance and femininity of maidens whom we know in real life to be weighty full-backs, smokers of the vilest twist and clients of Gillette. General Stanley's daughters were no less successful, no less maidenly than their elder sisters. One did, indeed, feel they were on a gay, girlish ramble, so spontaneous and lively was their song and dance, and in their excess of joie de vivre they seemed at times to outrun the orchestra and for a space, lose the exact symmetry and poise of their grouping. Or was this a natural overflow of the spirit of their outing, of making the most of fleeting leisure, to take leave for one moment of that tyrant the conductor? It all added, in its unconsciousness to the embarrassment of Frederic, unhappy intruder in their revels, and hailed rather generically and without real enthusiasm as "A man"! The scene which followed was beautifully handled, with Mabel, Edith and Kate, most expert triad of maidens, exploiting the humorous delicacy of the situation, and deflecting attention from any masculine hoarseness of voice by the quality of their acting. The tempo of the Opera had quickened, but it did not go full gallop, swinging the audience along with it, until both choruses met, for then we had something like a crowd, a noise, a tumult on the stage. This had been lacking before despite the grim vigour of the pirates and the gaiety of the girls. But now there was contrast, light and shade, and a foil for the colour and character of each chorus and for the individual talent of pirate and maiden. The entrance of the Major General, a truly Gilbertian figure, was faultless both in idea and execution; an immediate encore was called for, and the Major General (who was also the producer) never belied the excellence of his entry. His song of accomplishments was a delight; he made the most of the sheer swank of the rhyme, nor did we miss a consonant in the delivery. With something of triumph, then, we were swept on to the finale, and with "a Doctor of Divinity" resounding in our ears we adjourned to the traditional cold supper in the Common Room.

The Second Act began with the impetus with which the first had ended. "Oh, Dry the Glist'ning Tear" is a perfect background for the rumbling entrance of the Policemen's Chorus, and this particular chorus was epic, with a character quite its own. Previous presentation on the Venerabile stage in no way modified the originality of this posse of highly improbable constables. From the first roll of the bass clef we were enchanted by the extraordinary angular gait and strange facial expression of the Sergeant. Though his liegemen stepped as high and swung their truncheons with

equal abandon we gave the Sergeant (an old hand) our full attention. In fact, the entrance was so successful that the demand for repetition threatened to give these talented constables a circular beat they had not bargained for—wings, stage, wings *sine termino*. But it gave us time to study the other policemen before they were allowed their apologia in song in which again the Sergeant delighted us in both grimace and gesture. But the Policemen's Chorus did not dwarf the Second Act; in fact, the singing of Frederic was perhaps the most pleasing feature of the evening, for with Ruth, the King and Mabel he led a good team which suited its action to its song. But choruses have a way with them, and the Pirates' Chorus was a fitting climax to their bold career, and here Samuel, another past master of grimace and gesture, found an outlet for his abundant talent in distributing the weapons of burglary with grim complacence and satisfaction. Pirates and Police were indeed well matched, and with the girls, the three choruses danced and sang to a rousing finale, which left the audience eager for more—the most satisfactory of endings.

Yes, it was all in the best tradition, even in detail. From the fact of the three choruses not deterring the producer, despite small numbers, to the even more typical exploiting of the small chorus to give scope for individual talent, it was all true to form, a link with the pioneers to turn defect to advantage. For that surely is the tradition, the marriage of two elements, Gilbertian and Venerabile. We cannot merely imitate, did we wish to, and every Opera is in part a creation and an experiment in some line of production. It was traditional too in the faults, in the odd plot, the cumbersome dialogue, the ridiculous pirate-pilot error—Gilbertian; in the occasional collision, uncertainty about the encore's point de depart, a missed line—Venerabile. These latter are traditionally corrected on the second night, the former abide but are subsidiary. There was, too, the disappearance of one of the chapel pillars. We saw it quiver in protest at an unprovoked charge; we saw it had disappeared by the finale. The actual removal escaped us. Who was responsible for this legerdemain *in extenso* we never discovered. It was undeniably an achievement—Venerabile, not Gilbertian; it recalled those early days at St Mary's Hall, when our bookcase, a huge affair, disappeared during a momentary absence. But these faults were spots on the sun. What we remembered best is most difficult to express, the enthusiasm of the choruses, the music and colour, the vigour of the thing, the grimaces of Samuel and the Sergeant, the excellent singing and restrained acting of Frederic in a most difficult and unspectacular part, with Ruth an ideal companion in both song and action; and finally the polish and ease of the Major General, with all enjoying every inch of their parts.

In a congratulatory speech, again tradition, the Rector expressed a wish that the next Opera would be once more at Palazzola, and we sincerely join our wish to his, and inevitably hark back to the Villa cortile in the cool evening, with the fairy lights flickering from the cloister pillars, and the stars of a Mediterranean sky adding a splendour that, in retrospect, seems to belong to another world.

HUGH LAVERY.

19th *Monday*. And here is an apt opportunity for quoting a Latin version of the Sergeant's song in Act II.

Ubi fraudibus fraudator abrogatis (abrogatis)
Secum mediatur nil nefarii (arii)
Innocentis erit capax voluptatis (voluptatis)
Sicut ego, sicut tu, et ceteri (ceteri)
Aequam mentem non est quilibet servare (bet servare)
Quando transigendum est negotium (otium)
Visne hoc et illud bene compensare (compensare)
Haud grata vita Capitalium.
O, Quando transigendum est negotium (otium)
Haud grata vita Capitalium (talium)

Quando desinit dolosus fur furari (fur furari)
Et a caedibus sicarius vacat (us vacat)
Ecce rivuli susurros auscultari (auscultari)
Et aegrestis aedis hymnos adamat (adamat)
Ut in matrem caupo satis insultavit (insultavit)
In aprico sole quaerit otium (otium)
Si quis hoc et illud bene compensavit (compensavit)
Haud grata vita Capitalium.
O, Quando transigendum est negotium (otium)
Haud grata vita Capitalium (talium)

22nd *Thursday*. Whether today's performance of the Opera at Stonyhurst was better than last Saturday's, is a point verging on the moot. Certainly the orchestra, augmented by Scholastics, was far richer ; certainly the whole cast, principals and chorus were in better voice ; and certainly the audience, being much larger, was far easier to play to. The only fault we could find was a lack at times of that gay abandon which was so characteristic of last Saturday. But then, last Saturday we played at home.

23rd *Friday*. As we did some excavating work on our egg this morning, we mused on the traditional Spanish substitute for hour-glass egg-timers. It is to say two *Paters* for a lightly boiled egg, and three for a hard-boiled one. Ours bore the look of an egg which had had a whole rosary said over it.

25th *Palm Sunday* and three days' welcome respite from the pace of the last few weeks as we go into retreat under Fr J. P. Murphy.

28th *Wednesday*. Today (there is nothing like tradition for this sort of thing) we revived a curious old custom—rosary in private in public. I must admit that the combination was rather pleasant.

29th *Maundy Thursday*. It is said that *omne ens est bonum*, and we suppose that choir-practices can be classed, even if only *minus stricte*, as *entia*. There is however one time in the year when they become too much of a good thing, and that at Easter or thereabouts. Today's was the sixth since this time last week ; and as we settled down to go through the antiphons of tomorrow's Tenebrae, we thought about choirmasters. The first in our experience was definitely queer. He was a Müller fan, and for some

years we did deep breathing exercises and a short course of P.T. before each practice. The second was queer. Psalms from henceforward were to be sung with a two beat rest in the middle of the line instead of in the normal place—at the end of the line. Now and again we did some voice training which consisted of shouting the mystic word " hipbaar "—the " hip " on the highest note you could reach, and the " baar " on the lowest. And as we looked up and saw our third choirmaster fix his Druidic eye in our direction, we decided he was queer too.

31st *Holy Saturday*. Furtive figures slinking along the corridors with indian ink on their fingers and paint brushes behind their ears, are a certain sign that *Chi Lo Sa ?* is on the way,

APRIL 1st *Easter Sunday* and from what we could see from the third row of the scrum, it is quite a good number. Even the paid supporters laughed longer and louder than usual. It was fortunate in having the March Past of the Stonyhurst J.T.C. this morning, which made good copy for two last minute drawings. A double *prosit* to Mr Johnson who, though in the throes of editing this number, found time to compose a *Haec Dies* which made the traditional one sound very poor stuff indeed.

To dinner Fr T. McKenna.

2nd *Monday*. Part of this week's holidays-at-home entertainment was a boxing tournament, a ghastly spectacle redolent of the Roman amphitheatre. The opponent we had drawn from the hat was a hulking brute who, they told us, took regular boxing lessons every holiday. We donned the blood-bespattered gloves and waded in. In the course of the three rounds, we managed to hit the umpire over the ear twice, knock down a radiator and half a window frame from the wall, and severely damage one of the floorboards, so it must have been worth watching. The catcalls were still sounding in our ears as we staggered upstairs to massage our nose before Spiritual Reading.

To dinner Fr T. Marsh, and after tea a dramatic reading of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, sponsored by the Wiseman. Whether it would have been such a success as it proved to be if Fr McKenna had not been present, is hard to tell. As it was, even the weakest joke was rewarded with something that threatened to raise the roof.

Just to make it a day, we borrowed a film from Stonyhurst in the evening, and we shivered and shook as we saw *The Invisible Man Returns*. (Yes, Johnny, you're quite right ; *of course* we didn't *really* see him.)

3rd *Tuesday*. " When you're going on a gita
There is nothing that can beat a
*Bicchiere* of the best in Nemi town. . ."

but a pint of Old and Mild at Mytton isn't a bad substitute after walking thirty miles and scaling the highest peak in Yorkshire en route. At Hellifield I met an Italian prisoner of war. He was from Naples. Now I have been told that the Neapolitan dialect is almost a different language from Italian, but I assure you this is pure balderdash. The man I " spekked " with today was no more unintelligible than any other Italian prisoner of war I have ever come across.

On the way home, the usual problem arose of trying to keep the carriage to ourselves. George Robey, I believe, used to manage it by sticking whelks all over his face, but whelks are not as a rule included in the paraphernalia of an alfresc'. Usually we have succeeded by singing very loudly at every station, but today the train was crowded out and we had to find room in a first class carriage, already occupied by two venerable gentlemen. Although our clothes must have branded us as trippers, we managed to keep up an air of respectability by talking of the weather in a very polished Oxford accent. The impression was rather spoilt when one of the party tapped me on the knee and said : " I say, old man, can you lend me a Woodbine ? "

5th *Thursday*. The Company of Mary came over from Leagram Hall today to beat us in a return match, and they stayed to supper and a film.

6th *Friday*. The second Easter gita. We decided after the strenuous day last Tuesday to take things easy today. Not a " slugs' gita ", mind you—we didn't go near a bus all day—just a nice gentle stroll in the rain down to the Higher Hodder, where among other things we tried to bargain with the *padrone* for a Schwartzwald cuckoo clock ; another nice gentle stroll in the rain to Kemple End for lunch ; another nice gentle stroll to Hurst Green for tea ; and yet another nice gentle stroll home again. Strictly a walking gita, you see, and most satisfying to the inner man.

Fr P. Storey arrived to spend a few days here.

7th *Saturday*. The Young Christian Workers, who have taken over Stonyhurst for a Study Week-end, challenged us to a game of soccer today, and we went down to see how See—Judge—Act would work out on the field. We found their battle-cry " Come on the Christians " somewhat disconcerting and we rather felt we were witnessing a lions' tea-party in Nero's time. We countered with some relevant remarks like " Panes et circenses " and we waved our thumbs up and down, but as nobody seemed to understand we desisted.

As usual the lions won— 6—0,

8th *Sunday* and again today, 4—0 against another scratch team. Afterwards we were invited to the General Meeting and heard delegates from all over the country give their reports.

9th *Monday*. The transferred *Feast of the Annunciation*, and so schools vacated. Do you ever remember coming into a Greg aula for third lecture in the middle of summer ; masses of humanity, all the windows closed, and the air hitting you between the eyes ? Horrible, wasn't it ? We were reminded of it today. The weather was glorious and we thought we would spend a lazy afternoon by the Hodder, skimming stones, racing sticks, or just watching the Roughs. But we should have chosen our cam more carefully, for the youngest member said he liked garlic. We tried to steer him past the vast plantations of it by the river, but he had a sensitive nose, and no sooner did he smell the beastly stuff than he gave a croak, similar I suppose, to the noise a dope fiend would make when he scented cocaine. He gathered huge armfuls of it and insisted on chewing it all

afternoon. Even our Digger shag could not overcome it. We shall know better next time.

*Ben 'tornato* to Mr Murphy-O'Connor who returned tonight minus one cartilage but looking none the worse.

10th *Tuesday*. Fr T. Harrison arrived this evening, and we expressed our welcome by smoking his free tabs in the Common Room. Fr D. J. B. Hawkins also arrived, and on

11th *Wednesday* addressed the Literary Society on " English Philosophy and the Catholic Mind ". He had a number of nice things to say about Hamilton's philosophy, and fittingly enough Mr Hamilton gave the vote of thanks.

13th *Friday*. The other day the Head Gaffer made a public appeal for more help in the garden. The casual labour, it appeared, was practically non-existent, and the regular labour was no longer regular. Our conscience pricked us more than usual this afternoon, so we picked up a spade and went out. All the regular labour was there already. Part of it was sitting on a bench turning round the wheel of a wheelbarrow. When he began to feel that it would look a little odd if he did this all afternoon, he unscrewed the wheel, had a good look at it, and then screwed it on again. By this time it was three o'clock and so he downed tools and went in. Meanwhile three others were having the time of their lives by the pond. A few days ago they discovered a lead pipe in the bottom, and today they were continuing operations by diverting the current and squirting water at each other. Another was languidly pushing a bench backwards and forwards and every now and again sitting on it to find out which was the best position. We, the casual labour, were told to dig up a field of clay, and as we pushed our spade into Lancashire, we wondered how we could wangle into the regular labour next year.

Third Year Theology had their first introduction to the mysteries of the Breviary. We hear that one member was rather surprised to learn that " in L et M " meant in Lauds and Mass. He always thought that it meant in Leeds and Middlesbrough.

20th *Friday*. There is a saying that no one but a fool will discuss the Irish Question. If this is true we must have looked a perfect pack of idiots this evening when we tried to argue it out with the Hon. Frank Pakenham. At any rate it was one of those enjoyable nights when everyone enters into the discussion, indeed the matter was by no means settled when the meeting closed and

21st *Saturday* today the man who lives above the Superiors' Common Room assured us sleepily that the battle went on into the small hours.

23rd *Monday*. *Feast of St George*. Under a picture of St George balancing on a very downhearted dragon we found, on our table in the Refectory, the menu. And excellent though it all was, we couldn't help thinking enviously of the Lucullan feast which was shipped in the good old days, according to a menu which we found in a text-book recently, and which is signed on the back by several members of the present Hierarchy.

From the very first words, " Oysters etc " (and one can cram into those last three letters all that one holds dear in the Epicure's Encycl.), the menu trips gaily through Roast Turkey and Asparagus to Tipsey Cake, pausing on the way to dabble with Veuve Cliquot 1926 and Courvoisier Cognac Naturel. And although an exhausted halt is called at " Nuts," the printing in red on the opposite page invitingly offers more refreshments in the form of

Port : Delaforce
Older than the Crimean War.

What a port that must have been ! It is not, you notice, designated by a mere *stravecchio* ; it is not specified by a mere date—how can a number convey the character of such a port ? No, " Older than the Crimean War ". The very reading of the words seems to fill the head with a fragrance that makes one dizzy. . .

Before Solemn Benediction this afternoon our opinion of the Sacristans suffered a severe setback when news came through that they had left all their keys inside the locked sacristy. The situation was saved by a noble volunteer who offered to crawl along the three inch ledge outside and enter by the window.

In the evening the Theologians' Concert, which was as good as any we've had for some time. The " Lightning Sketches " were the hit of the evening as the subsequent history of the Common Room showed, and the Top Year Interlude ran a close second. The other two sketches reinforced the theory that six days' practice is insufficient.

GEORGIO EKBERY
qui a Barbaris ad Romanos, a caecitate
Rationis ad lumen Fidei, a filiis huius
saeculi ad filios lucis, ad commodum
tam nostrum quam suum, feliciter
transiit, in festo nationalis
sed et personalis Patroni
haec optima scaenica
theologi grati
d. d.

1. Seventh Year Song

*Chorus :* Ex hinc in vineam mox egressuri
Nos vobis valedicimus.
Ad sedem Petri vos iam profecturi
Tenete nos in cordibus.
Benedic semper, Venerabile,
Tua benigna nos ingenie.

2. Two " Lightning Sketches " Messrs Killeen, Farrow, Peters, Crissell

3. Octet Messrs J. Groarke, Swaby ; Buxton, Anglim; Barry, Scantlebury ; Kelly, Sowerby
" Three Chafers " and " Jolly Roger "

4. SKETCH *Two scenes from Bernard Shaw's*
SAINT JOAN

| | |
|---|---|
| *Earl of Warwick* | Mr Peters |
| *Messire Jean de Stogumber* | Mr Richards |
| *Bishop of Beauvais* | Mr Devaney |
| *John Lemaître O.P.* | Mr Swaby |
| *Canon John D'Estivet* | Mr Farrow |
| *Canon de Courcelles* | Mr Chadwick |
| *Martin Ladvenu O.P.* | Mr Anglim |
| *The Executioner* | Mr Swan |
| *Joan* | Mr Williams |

5. SEVENTH YEAR INTERLUDE
UP WITH THE LARK
or
*The Westminster Constitution*

| | |
|---|---|
| *The Judge* | Mr Sowerby |
| *Counsel for the Prosecution* | Mr Campbell |
| *An Usher* | Mr Kelly |
| *The Defendant* | Mr J. Groarke |
| *A House Spirit* | Mr Buxton |
| *The Jury (Mme Arcati)* | Mr Clark |

6. VIOLIN DUET . . . . Fr Ekbery and Mr Shelton
Sonatina No. IV (*I. Pleyel*)

7. ONE ACT PLAY
THE PLAYGOERS
*by Sir A. Pinero*

| | |
|---|---|
| *The Master* | Mr Campbell |
| *The Mistress* | Mr Buxton |
| *The Cook* | Mr Richards |
| *The Kitchenmaid* | Mr Killeen |
| *The Parlourmaid* | Mr J. Groarke |
| *The Housemaid* | Mr Scantlebury |
| *The Useful Maid* | Mr Tyler |
| *The Odd Man* | Mr Barry |

24th *Tuesday*. As we settled down to our pipe this morning we were pained to see three students with books under their arms make cabbalistic signs to each other and leave the Common Room together to go to Aula I; and we wondered why men invent so many ridiculous methods of using their leisure. For the road to hell is paved with bad inventions. Once it was the Müller-bug which bit almost half the members of the College, and at most times of the day you would see young students and old students, fat students and lean—all intent on developing, for some obscure reason, their stomach muscles and neck muscles. Then someone read a book on *Better Sight Without Glasses* and for some weeks he and his devoted disciples made their own and our lives a misery by wandering around half blind without their glasses, and spending all their spare time in "palming", rolling their

eyeballs and staring at the sun when there was any. This was called " Eye Exercises ". Now the latest racket is Pelmanism, and religiously every morning three men will assemble in Aula I to study the subject. We suppose they will gain more followers, but we doubt if it will last very long. The only other man we ever knew to take it up, told us after two weeks that if anybody could keep up the exercises every day, he didn't need Pelmanism.

25th *Wednesday*. Everyone knows that the *Salve* goes flat. It just happens. It's the sort of thing you can't do very much about, however often you practise singing it in pitch. It has *always* been done, and after some years it gets into your blood and becomes the *only* way of singing it. Why then does the man who stands behind me insist on singing it all half a tone sharp ? Is he just tone deaf, or does he think he is helping to keep the pitch up ? I find the best thing to do is to sing one and a half tones flat. It does at least harmonize then.

26th *Thursday*. When someone wrote that for the sake of tradition we would even eat a plateful of string in tomato sauce, I laughed at what I thought was an excusable use of hyperbole. But after today, I am beginning to wonder. Because in Rome at this time of the year we held an annual Mass at the Catacombs of San Callisto, someone decided that tradition must be satisfied by walking a similar distance to Whalley to sing Mass there. He, of course, went by taxi.

27th *Friday*. Fr J. O'Connell came to stay with us for a few days, and we talked of ceremonies and liturgical altars.

30th *Monday*. In domo frigus patior rivale
non iuvat cerni gelidum cubile
nec foris lectore calens repertam
prendo quietem.

And outside it's even colder. At this rate the Reservoir. . . Anyway we pulled down our skates from the top of the *armadio* just to make sure that all the screws are in order.

MAY 1st *Tuesday*. Fr G. Seaston came to speak to the C.S.G. on the Problems of Post-War Finance, and he offered a very plausible solution. This however did not cheer us half so much as the news that our *piccoli* had arrived.

4th *Friday*. *Feast of the English Martyrs*. A crowded day. First a visit to St Peter's, then a walk to Pam, pausing to admire the view of Soracte from the top of the steps, the match with the Scots, and across the Fabrizio to spend the evening on the Pincio. And just as we thought the day was over, lo and behold we were whisked away to the Villa by tram. There we found Luigi singing in the garden, Dom ladling out strings of steaming spag, Marietta and *piccolo* Bill and Phebbo . . . hot wine in the wiggery . . . we saw all this and more tonight on Mgr Smith's films. They whetted the appetite of those who have yet to see them all in flesh and blood ; and I'm afraid they wetted the cheeks of those who feel they have

seen the last of them. Still, it is better to have loved and lost . . . or as the poet has it :

Pervixi ; neque enim fortuna malignior unquam
Eripiet nobis quod prior hora dedit.

6th *Sunday*. If you were to turn up your last Magazine and guess which two of the cast of the Pantomime were cantors today, you would be wrong. So would you be on your second guess, and your third, and so on until you had come to the remaining pair. These two sang for us today and made the fatal mistake of trying to sing the words of the *Tantum Ergo* to an *O Salutaris* tune. We hear that they are to be transferred.

7th *Monday*. It was bound to happen soon. The outer circle of the crossword clique, finding life a little lonely where clues had generally been solved by the time they had been passed out to them, have moved off to form a circle of their own. And now, with a group on either side of us, the tension in the morning Common Room is almost unbearable. I suppose these people do crosswords because they cannot stand small talk at that time of the morning, but solving anagrams seems to me to be rather a drastic alternative. Herbert Spencer had a much easier way out : he had some earflaps made, which he pulled down whenever the conversation bored him.

Tonight, we heard the announcement of the official V Day tomorrow and so we opened the bottles which had been stored for this occasion and drank the King's Health in Port ;

8th *Tuesday* and naturally V Day was celebrated with song and feasting. The Refectory was decorated with beech leaves and a huge Union Jack and Old Glory provided by the props men. Then Solemn Benediction with *Te Deum* and a film at Stonyhurst in the evening.

9th *Wednesday*. A repeat performance of *Blithe Spirit* was given at Stonyhurst tonight with great success. It was perhaps more technically perfect than the first performance : the lights did not fuse in Act I and the pictures and vases really did fall down in Act III. Even a cushion was made to fly into the air ; though it was rather hard on the man who had to compress himself behind the sofa during the whole scene to project same.

10th *Thursday*. An error in punctuation made today's programme read : " 11.00 a.m. Beda arrive smoking". They did, of course, and we joined them. A most enjoyable day with a game of cricket in the afternoon in which someone won but I forget who and don't care either, and an impromptu concert in the evening in which, of course, Mr Barber figured largely.

14th *Monday*. Coming down to first lecture this morning, we observed that Dick Holden, the College handyman, had camped himself and his bag of tools on the middle corridor, where he was busy knocking a hole into a student's room. Speculation was rife and the wildest of theories were propounded. Strangely, the most commonly accepted was that " Charlie " had accidentally locked himself in and Dick was liberating him. By twelve o'clock the secret was out. A huge board was hanging on the wall,

looking like an arrivals indicator, with times running one way and Saints' names the other. Scattered all over the board are jolly little knobs with names on them. The Sacristans explained to the milling crowds that it is a Mass Board. The man who hung his *zimarra* on the knob bearing his name does not seem to have quite got the idea.

Tonight at the Grant the Opposition tried to justify the Smoking Habit, and several opinions were aired which definitely smelled of the faggot.

15th *Tuesday*. As the result of a little *conversazione* between the Laundry Man and the Rosehill Laundry, the latter agreed to terminate their Victory celebrations tonight and bring us back our washing tomorrow. We were rather relieved, as our towel was beginning to look rather like a ball of cotton waste.

17th *Thursday*. Although I enjoy a good tune now and again as much as the next man, I would think twice and perhaps even three times before calling myself a Music-Lover. In fact the title smacks rather of the snobbishness of the Sacred Initiate who commune only with one another, save when they stand at the door of the Temple of Euterpe and, with great contempt, drop some few phrases of an unintelligible language to the gaping crowd without. I was chary therefore about going to the " Music-Lovers' Concert " advertised for tonight in Aula I. But I need not have worried, for it was most enjoyable. The shouts for an encore of Handel's Violin Concerto were the loudest I have yet heard here.

18th *Friday*. If ever I am in urgent need of some ready cash, I shall write a best-seller entitled *Memoirs of a Film Committee Man*. It will have a lurid dust cover of two pink film-machines rampant, intersected by a bright yellow oil-can ; and today's frolics will have a chapter of their own. After yesterday's frantic telephone calls to cancel a film which we heard was on the way and which we had already seen, we were looking forward tonight to some slapstick from Will Hay. Our machine, as usual, was indisposed and we had borrowed the Stonyhurst projector. It was soon after we had switched on that the fun began. A spiral of dark grey smoke issued from its bowels, and after we had made sure that no one had dropped his pipe inside, we switched off and sent for help. Fr Lawrence, in his genial way, chuckled and said something had gone wrong. There was nothing for it now but to see how our own machine would stand up to Will Hay, but the Third Electrician, who was threading the film, complained that he got a shock every time he touched the machine. After thinking it over for ten minutes, the Head Electrician sucked at his pipe, said " Short somewhere " and proceeded to dismantle the machine. We never really got rid of that short ; the machine was live all afternoon, but we stopped bothering about that when we saw that the film had started flickering. We dismantled it again, put a new spring in somewhere and started again. But it was no use. The Head Electrician switched off, thought for another few minutes and said " We've had it ". Sadly we wound up the film. . .

The evening's entertainment consisted finally of two M.o.I. films and a newsreel run on the Stonyhurst machine—without sound. This didn't

worry the audience very much, for they provided their own music and commentary.

Fr P. Clark was here to join in the fun.

19th *Saturday*. You will be sorry to hear that you are to be deprived of my presence for the next few days, so you can take anything you read here until next Saturday *cum grano*. In the bathroom before the retreat began I overheard someone say: "Poor fellows ! I'm glad I'm not going into retreat." " Faugh ", was the reply (the only time I've ever heard the word actually spoken), " wouldn't mind if I was getting the Sub." And there you have it in a nutshell. You can keep your Whit holiday, your free time, your extra smoking, your cards, your Common Room games and even your gita. *I'm* going to get the Sub.

20th *Whit Sunday*. Mgr Smith, who has come to give the retreat to Third Year Theology, was the celebrant at High Mass this morning. The Choirmaster kindly gave us a morning off. While we appreciate this gesture in recognition of the sterling work that the Choir does throughout the year, we cannot help thinking that the choice of day was unfortunate. On a *festa* everybody likes to sing and today it required a certain amount of self-control to stand down and allow the Schola to justify its existence. However, it did so admirably and gave us the *Mass for Three Voices* by William Byrd.

But the day had a happy ending. At Solemn Benediction the Choir had their full share of singing, for the hymn was *Noi Vogliam' Dio*, and finally, in the evening, Schola and Choir sunk any differences by having a sing-song in the Common Room with Mgr Smith at the piano.

22nd *Tuesday*. A gita day is a good opportunity to get reacquainted with College Songs. At least, that was what we found today as we sang through four pantomimes. We kept to the fells and were more fortunate than those who went farther afield to Bolton Abbey and paid for their " bricking " by getting wet.

25th *Friday*. Bishop Ellis arrived with Frs H. Wilson and D. Key, and on

26th *Saturday* the ten members of Third Year Theology received the Subdiaconate. *Ad maiora !*

27th *Trinity Sunday*. All right, you can put away that salt-cellar now. We are back again. Bishop Ellis pontificated at High Mass this morning. The Schola, in spite of all its efforts, could not hide from us the fact that it is now composed of only six members, four of whom are *bassi profondi*.

At coffee after dinner we were pleased to note one of our junior members keeping up the traditional way of filling a gap in the conversation : he asked the Bishop : " How many Communists are there in England ? "

After supper more of Mgr Smith's films, ably compèred by Mgr Smith himself.

31st *Thursday*. *Corpus Christi*. We mean it, of course, in the good sense when we say that this afternoon's procession at Stonyhurst reminded us of Italy. The choir was not composed of five-frankers ; but the hot, still afternoon, the pageantry and the general air of *festa*—even the refreshments provided afterwards—brought back to mind the Roman function.

And we were reminded again of Italy this evening, though in a different way, when Major Reedy talked to us of his experiences there. The crossfire of questions afterwards was rapid—and we hear that the Major was as impressed by us as we were by him.

JUNE 1st *Friday*. Little white bags with numbers on them (don't mistake me—I mean laundry bags) have appeared, and notices crop up periodically signed by either the Vice-Rector or the Laundry Man, telling us what to do with them. Also we have each been provided with a laundry book, so that we can now address our remarks directly to Mr Rosehill. Some, I hear, have already half filled their books. This regimentation is, I suppose, all to the good. At least it will give less bother to number 40, who has regularly found all the size 40 pyjamas in his pigeon-hole.

2nd *Saturday*. And talking of pyjamas, a pair of bright red ones lies unclaimed in the Visitors' room. The last occupant was the Bishop of Nottingham and tongues are wagging.

3rd *Sunday*. Our own Corpus Christi procession was held this afternoon—indoors, since it was raining. The Third Sacristan tried to impress us with the number of candles he displayed on both altars, but we knew how it was done because we heard him clumping down the back stairs with them as we were processing down the main stairs. In the evening Common Room the lingering incense blended well with the smell of tobacco.

8th *Friday*. I'm going to murder that bird that sits on my window-sill at 5.53 each morning and sings : " Spring will be a little late this year."

9th *Saturday*. A toothache is not a pleasant thing to have, but it gives you a chance of a morning in Preston—if you're keen on that sort of thing. On the way in this morning, a fellow passenger suddenly gave a shriek and fell on the floor of the bus, foaming at the mouth. Curiously enough, everyone nearby looked round at me with a " What are you going to do about it ? " expression. I kept my eye glued on Sext and nervously fingered the back pages where the short form is kept, wondering how much *Ecclesia* would *supplet* in a case like this. Eventually the bus stopped, and driver and conductor came to see what could be done. Everyone crowded round, shouting " Give him air ", " Lay him on his back ", " Undo his shoes ", " Sit him up " and the like, but the poor man was still foaming. After a short pow-wow the driver got back and drove the whole busload of us round the back streets of Longridge in search of a doctor. When we eventually reached Preston, I found I was late for my appointment and had to wait another hour. I didn't worry very much because my toothache had gone.

Before coming back I tried to buy a typewriter ribbon, and discovered that the principle " The customer is always right " no longer seems to

obtain. Nor did the assistant seem to have the slightest idea of what I was talking about when I asked for a " sconto per collegio ". *Tempora mutantur.*

On my return I found that the letter for this year's examinations is X, a fact which will give great joy to all those whose surnames begin with this letter.

10th *Sunday.* One result of the weather is that the rugger players are having a far longer season than they ever dreamed of. In this afternoon's game the mud proved a bit too much for Mr Derbyshire, who slipped up and broke his ankle. The rest of the team found a door for a stretcher and carried him down to the road, where the Vice-Rector was waiting with the car. By the time they reached the front door, the doctor also had arrived, and before tea the victim had been whirled away to Mount Street. The Infirmarian was so excited over this, his first real " case ", that he forgot to pack the pyjamas.

To dinner, Mr Walsh of *The Catholic Times.*

11th *Monday.* The theology thesis sheet has at last appeared, still incomplete and probably incorrect. I notice that one of the theses on the first page is doubled on the second page—which brings the number down to forty-four and makes my plan of campaign rather easier. If I do three-and-three-quarter theses every day while lectures are still on, four-and-a-half theses on Thursdays, Sundays and free days, and five-and-a-quarter theses every day when lectures end, then by the time the exam comes round—I shall probably be stark raving mad.

Fr Auchinlech looked in at teatime, and later Fr Wyche, whose face seems to be getting familiar.

12th *Tuesday.* To breakfast, Dr Butterfield. He tells us he is engaged on writing a new book on the spiritual life, and in order to finish by the end of the month has to write three hundred words a day. His worries are increased by the fact that he is at present struggling through a chapter on the troubles of life.

Belloc is three days away from Rome. We wish we were. He has entered a part of Italy which even we know well, and descriptions of Montefiascone and the walls of Viterbo arouse nostalgia.

13th *Wednesday.* " *Lector :* But this is dogg. . .
*Auctor :* Enough."

And so it ended. Coming to think of it, a book like *The Path to Rome*, if it is going to be read aloud, really needs two readers. Then perhaps we could have a new office in the Hebdom. Book, which would read : " Lector ad Mensam, Magister X. Auctor ad Mensam, Magister Y."

14th *Thursday.* Mr Derbyshire is back from hospital, complete with a plaster cast which the rugger team are busily autographing. A committee for working the coal-lift to heave him up to his room was on the point of being formed when someone thought of the simpler expedient of putting him in a ground floor room.

16th *Saturday*. " It would be of great help to me if some of your students would be kind enough to assist with the kale as they did last year. A dozen or so even for an hour each day only for about a week would be of great help.

I would be pleased to have your comments.

Yours sincerely,

T. S. Walton."

I don't think you would.

22nd *Friday*. Kale. " Curvatus sum usque in finem. . . Lumbi mei impleti sunt illusionibus."

24th *Sunday*. The match with Stonyhurst Colts was a draw—which bodes ill for the match against their First Eleven next Saturday. During the game, we were sitting next to the scorer, and were rather fascinated by the Bowlers' Averages. Possibly these really do convey some information, but we have always felt about averages very much the same as the man who said : " If you were struck dead by lightning at my side, and I remained safe and sound, we should both be on the average half dead."

25th *Monday*. The Film Machine has returned after a few weeks of convalescence in the South. The Electrician tells me that four brand new rubber grommets have been inserted.

26th *Tuesday*. " Now all say ' cheese '—that's right—hold it . . . one, two, three . . ." *bzzz*. " Just one more, please. One, two, three. . ." *bzzz*. " Thank you." And we tried hard to look intelligent as we put ourselves on record for later generations to stare at.

27th *Wednesday*. We couldn't have been quick enough. The proof which came today shows that the camera caught us halfway between the at-ease expression and the intelligent expression. The result is ghastly.

Lectures ended amid a flourish of loud applause, and this evening Mr Balnaves read a paper to the Wiseman on T. S. Eliot. It was, I am afraid, quite beyond most of us, and showed little more than, to borrow a phrase, the triumph of mind over metre.

28th *Thursday*. The Film Machine, after a slight relapse, was rushed off to Clitheroe for the electrical equivalent of a couple of aspirins. It was later reported in A1 condition and fighting fit for the big show tomorrow.

To tea, the Stonyhurst Committee. We spent the morning looking up a few tips in a book which has come our way : *How to be a Convincing Talker and a Charming Conversationalist*, and took a great deal of trouble memorising what we were assured were the main principles : " Never put your face within three feet of the person you are talking to.

" Don't tap him, except perhaps with a pencil, and then lightly.

" Let the company decide, by the degree of its interest and by requests to you to go on, how much detail it wants to hear about your doings. Unless such requests are definitely made, don't go on."

But something went wrong after tea, and we found ourselves stuck for the evening next to the man we have been sitting beside in the circle for the past two weeks.

29th *Friday*. *SS. Peter and Paul.* A large *prosit* to the nuns for the feast they provided today. That little something they had put in the trifle reminded one of *zuppa inglese.*

But tragedy stalked the house, in the guise of a recalcitrant Film Machine. If this Diary is beginning to read like a log-book of the Film Machine, don't blame me. Today at least it was the centre of attention, for it was to provide us with the first full-length film show for months. After tea we found we could not make it go at the required speed. We plied it with oil, coaxed it with petrol, petted it, soothed it and whispered sweet words to it, but it stolidly refused to go any faster. I have an idea that those four brand new rubber grommets had something to do with it, but didn't mention my suspicious to the Electricians for fear of hurting their feelings. Sadly we packed up the machine, sent *The Santa Fé Trail* back to the library, and gave out the usual announcement : " Owing to a technical hitch, there will be no film." The *macchina* had won again.

30th *Saturday*. As I tore off the June sheet from my calendar this evening, I mused over the conundrum which its makers had thoughtfully provided for my intellectual enjoyment during the past month. " Why is a cloud like a king ? Because they both rain (reign) over us." Wonderful, isn't it ?

Mr Robert Speaight came to supper, and on

JULY 1st *Sunday* addressed the Literary Society on France. I have noticed before the queer pipes which always appear at these meetings, but I was surprised by the contraption I saw tonight—a full-dress Swiss mountain pipe, complete with perforated lid and green lanyard. Perhaps these people are shy of their pipes and will smoke them only when they are less exposed to public view than in a Common Room circle ; or perhaps they find them impossible to manage in the congestion of a circle. But the fact remains that a Literary Society meeting always sees a most remarkable assortment of outlandish pipes. I have seen large cherrywoods, the size of a man's fist, which had to be supported by a table. I have even heard of a man who found his so heavy on the teeth that he tied a brick to the end of a piece of string attached to the bowl and dangled the brick over his shoulder. I am eagerly awaiting the day when someone brings down a hookah and rosebowl.

2nd *Monday*. Now it's turnip-thinning ; and since we have not had any Latin quotations for some time, here is one that fits : " Quemadmodum olera herbarum cito decident."

3rd *Tuesday*. A letter has arrived from Mgr Carroll-Abbing describing the economic situation in Rome at present. Cassocks, if they can be obtained, are costing £250 each. Back in my room I sorted out a few old cassocks which I was going to give for salvage. At this rate they ought to fetch at least £50 each.

5th *Thursday*. The room-changing list in the Common Room is giving those who intend to move next year very pensive looks. Weighing up the respective merits of nearness to ash bucket and state of wear of mattress

is a ticklish business. We found a room which is two yards nearer the stairs than our present one and have decided to move. Those two yards may make all the difference one morning.

Those whose names were on the local register went down to the polling-booth in Hurst Green to register their votes. One of them was asked on the way out: " Oh Vicar, may we borrow your telephone ? " He replied that he had not got it on him at the moment and walked on.

7th *Saturday*. What I know about cricket could be written in large uncials on the back of a postage stamp. I was rather surprised therefore when asked to umpire the annual match against Hodder today. Apparently it didn't matter much, for my instructions were quite simple: to give our team out on the slightest pretext and to keep the eyes firmly closed while the Hodder boys were in. We had arranged with the Scholastic in charge that Hodder should go in first, so that we could see how many runs we mustn't make ; but they must have smelled a rat, because upon winning the toss they chose to field first. The Scholastic saved the situation by pretending not to hear and said " That's right, you bat first ". Unfortunately the cricket rules I had looked over during the morning didn't have anything to say about what one should do when a ball lands on a spectator's head and so I was rather doubtful about what sign to give the scorer. In desperation I shouted " No ball " and we had that one again.

9th *Monday*. *SS. John Fisher and Thomas More*. The day of the annual pilgrimage to Catforth to sing High Mass at St Robert's.

The newspapers told us that there would be an eclipse of the sun this afternoon, and we all crowded out of doors to watch it—as if it were something unusual. Fr Holloway arrived in the middle of it all.

10th *Tuesday*. My notes for today, which must have been written in considerable hurry, consist of two words with a full stop between them. The first is " Leeds ", but this bald statement fails to strike any familiar chord. The second looks like " zwelfork ", but when looked at sideways with one eye closed it can be made to read " sclithscrop ". This is also a mystery.

12th *Thursday*. Today's notes are rather more intelligible. " Tromp Hodder " means that I spent the afternoon in bathing tande by the river, glancing through *De Revelatione*, and " Mendelssohn* " means that I was so thrilled by Fr Ekbery's violin solo in the last of the Music-Lovers' Concerts that not until the end of the evening did I realise that I had been smoking an empty pipe.

13th *Friday*. I wonder if you have noticed what a dreadful lot of Fridays we are getting this year.

14th *Saturday*. *Auguri* to Top Year who left this morning for Heythrop, where they are taking the Licentiate.

15th *Sunday*. In view of what is going to happen tomorrow, the choice of hymn at tonight's Benediction was not very happy :

Lord, for tomorrow and its needs
I do not pray.

However, the fourth verse was fitting enough, and we sang the lines :

Let me no wrong or idle word
Unthinking say,

with rather more than usual fervour.

16th *Monday*. " Adversarii huius theseos sunt . . . er, er . . ."

" Harnack ? "

" Non, nihil faciens, non in hac thesi. Puto quod. . . Ad difficultatem sic respondeo : aliqualiter, concedo ; nihilominus, nego."

*Et factus sum sicut homo non audiens, et non habens in ore suo redargutiones.*

17th *Tuesday*. And so another year is over (lot of dust on this suitcase). A few Philosophers remain at the College to give their accounts today, but everyone else has already gone (three shirts ought to be enough). Such a moment naturally calls for an apt quotation (I wonder if I ought to take a Code). But diaries that end in that way are obviously written after the event (mustn't forget my ration book). As we stagger downstairs with a mattress, two blankets and a pillow in one hand and a bucket in the other, we can only wonder where on earth we have put our railway ticket.

HUBERT RICHARDS.

# COLLEGE NOTES

## THE VENERABILE

Since the last number we have to record the retirement of Mr Tyler from the office of Editor. The Staff is now composed of :—

Editor : Mr Williams
Sub-editor : Mr Alexander
Secretary : Mr Anglim
Under-secretary : Mr Dixon

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*Baeda*, *Beda Review*, *Claves Regni*, *Downside Review*, *The Edmundian*, *The Oscotian*, *Pax*, *Prior Park College Magazine*, *The Ratcliffian*, *The Ushaw Magazine*, *The Wonersh Magazine*.

## LITERARY SOCIETY

It is interesting to note how accurately the Society reflects the main trends of thought current in the outside world. We are not limited to one standpoint, for the lawyer, the soldier, the politician and the professor all offer us their summing up of a particular aspect of the world's problems. What could be more calculated to broaden the mind and enrich the imagination ?

At a time when Europe is in the melting pot and when none can say whether the result will be a golden age or an ersatz bronze one, it is natural that politics should figure prominently in the list of subjects. Professor Allison Peers gave us an interesting insight into the position of Spain, whilst Professor Zoltowski described the sad plight of Poland. From Major Reedy we had some first hand impressions of the state of present day Italy, and the Irish Question was admirably explained by the Hon. Frank Pakenham. Finally Mr Woodruff conducted us on a lightning tour of Europe with special reference to the prospects of the Church.

Several old friends of the Society again favoured us with a visit. Mr Richard O'Sullivan K.C. demonstrated his gift for transforming the dry

bones of law into a living and engrossing theme, Mgr Smith returned to remind us of the grandeur that was Rome and Mr Arnold Lunn gave us the benefit of his wide experience of " The Intellectual Attack upon Catholicism ".

But, while welcoming back past speakers we are not afraid of innovation and a new and most welcome departure was the musical evening in which Mr Chambers dealt with the question of " An Approach to Modern Popular Songs ". Each of his points was aptly illustrated on the piano. Such a talk, together with those of Fr Christie on the Y.C.W. and Flying Officer Holloway, has a wide appeal. In contrast to this the addresses of Dr Hawkins on English Philosophy and Dr W. E. Orchard on *The Divine Comedy* were more specialised.

At last the apparent taboo on papers from the House has been broken. Mr English described " The Birth of Irish Democracy " and was in full stride when the clock stole a march on him. Mr Tolkien read a most instructive paper on the Modern Press.

Fifteen meetings in a year is a record, at least since the Society crossed the sea, and in other respects too, it has been a most successful season. We wish equal good fortune to the new President and Secretary, Mr Tyler and Mr Murphy-O'Connor.

## GRANT DEBATING SOCIETY

When Lord Baldwin called oratory " the harlot of the Arts " he was doubtless thinking of the effect a speaker like Mark Antony could have on the mob. But Mark Antonys are few and far between in our Society and when we do occasionally rise to one it is no easy matter for him to convince an audience which philosophy and theology have made immune from the charms of " easy speeches that comfort cruel men ". But this has not deterred speakers from coming forward. In fact there has been a revival from the slunp which this time last year seemed to threaten the future of the Grant.

The constitution of our Society would merit the approval of a second Cowen. All members are encouraged to take part in the debates and the younger amongst us certainly responded well. Indeed their efforts were so successful that at times the older ones must have felt something like the secret admiration of Henry for the " young bearded boy ". That the Theologians found it necessary to refuse a challenge to debate from the Philosophers, is a good omen for the future of the Society.

The motions were well chosen and varied. The need for a more intellectual clergy, the future of Europe, the position of women in the professions, the cinema and the smoking habit were all discussed with zest. Perhaps our best debate was on history. The sincerity with which some people believed that leaders had taken a greater part than peoples in the making of history, was only matched by the sincerity of the others who believed the reverse to be true.

The thriving Society is entrusted to the care of Mr Williams, who has as his secretary Mr Walmsley.

## WISEMAN SOCIETY

One of the many disconcerting things about discussion is that it often raises more problems than it solves. And one who attended all seven meetings of the Wiseman this year might be forgiven if he admitted that at the end of the season he was confronted with one big problem—the best way to approach a subject and write a paper for such a society as the Wiseman where discussion is one of the essentials of a meeting. Let it be admitted that this year the standard of papers was higher than previous years—but they all seemed to fail in the same way. Each took the same line of approach. Its subject was a historical or literary figure, and although gaining acquaintance with the great minds of the past is calculated to enrich and ennoble our own minds, unless it is done carefully one is apt to stress the man rather than the movements he set in progress, the mortal author rather than the immortal work. We can detect in this a confusion between appreciation and criticism. Appreciation strives to make us see a man as he was by giving an account of his character and his experiences where he is very much the victim of circumstances ; whereas criticism is less emotional, it prescinds from the personal characteristics of the writer and attempts to see where the greatness lies, it strives to evaluate the work by putting it against the background of the age.

Mr Stewart's paper on Cowper perhaps best illustrates what I mean. Not that it was a bad paper—in fact the whole of this criticism is meant as a spur to even greater effort and not as a condemnation of what was a very successful season. He approached the problem as many other people would have done by giving the life first and then the poetry. But the disadvantage of this method is that the life and character of the man prejudices the audience beforehand, and the subsequent treatment of the work suffers. Cowper's madness should not be allowed to enter into a criticism of his work, save only as corroborative evidence. Mr O'Dowd in his treatment of Edgar Wallace avoided this particular pitfall, but unfortunately he could not resist giving some account of Wallace's adventurous life and this had the effect of distracting attention from the main part of the paper which was concerned with the commercialisation of literature and decay of the reading public.

During the year we had two well written papers on leading figures in the Catholic Church in England. Mr Spillane introduced us to John Lingard, giving us a good background of his times, and Mr Groarke dealt with the work of Ambrose Phillips de Lisle and " The Second Spring ". Mr English took us back to the eighteenth century political scene with his paper on Edmund Burke, and nearly accomplished the impossible—giving a true picture of Burke without quoting all his works. Finally Mr Balnaves gave a stimulating paper on the poetry of T. S. Eliot, and successfully met the shafts of criticism that were directed at him afterwards. On the lighter side we must not forget to mention Mr Williams' presentation of a dramatic reading from Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest.*

As you can see, it was a fruitful season and we conclude by endorsing the remarks we made at the beginning. We hope that in future years

biography and appreciation will give way to true criticism, literary and historical. Such a programme will avoid the dangers of attempting to cover too wide a field and entangling oneself with incidents of little import. Above all, it will benefit the discussion, and is worth trying even if it means that the attendance at the meetings will fall off somewhat.

Mr Alexander is the new Secretary.

## CATHOLIC SOCIAL GUILD

It is the fashion to glorify the pessimist as the realist and to dub the optimist emotional idealist. But although the general attitude to the topics discussed this year was surprisingly optimistic, I do not think that members can be accused of emotionalism nor of idealistically building castles in Stepney. Indeed it is hard to say how far the year has been successful, not because I have doubts, but because there is no real way of measuring success or failure. To give a list of the meetings, the activities and books consulted by the circles, would be merely statistical and would not help us to a true estimate. But the reports from the circle leaders left me with a favourable impression. As one such report put it, " the members came away, not with a jumble of facts, but with a frame of mind " —a very valuable benefit.

However it may be of interest to know that we studied government control, youth organisations, entertainments, the Christian family and agriculture. As you see, a very varied programme, which was studied by thirty-eight people. In addition Mr Swan read a paper to the House on the origin of Capitalism and Mr Killeen one entitled " Socialism without Tears ". Fr A. Hulme spoke to us on Youth Movements and Fr G. Seaston informed us of the mysteries and platitudes involved in High Finance.

An extraordinarily lively business meeting at the end of the year confirmed our opinion of the House's continued interest in the Guild and it brought to light several interesting suggestions for the future. Mr M. Groarke was elected Secretary with Mr Lowery as his assistant.

The C.S.G. would be very grateful for any gifts of books which could be added to our dismally small sociology library.

## SPORTS

### CRICKET

It is not often that the sun pushes its head through the rain clouds in our part of the world. The Cricket Captain's joy can well be imagined then, when this phenomenon occurred in Easter Week. An early start promised a good season and was very much to our liking. This early enthusiasm was even more gratifying to the Few who had done their best to tame the somewhat recalcitrant wicket. At Whitsuntide the enthusiasm was more restricted and when the Summer Programme began the three or four who could still enthuse on English College Cricket were canvassing support, and when this failed, solemnly departing with bat and ball to practise their strokes alone. These were the die-hards—the Traditionalists.

But although they were the most consistent, they were not the only ones who contributed to our cricket. For instance, there were still some gullible ones who could be convinced of the amenities cricket afforded. They were the Sensualists. There were others, unselfish in the extreme, who would " make up numbers " when called upon—the Occasionalists. And this raises an interesting point. It has never yet been determined upon what numbers a man may morally rest and call for volunteers. Upon one occasion twenty-two people " made up numbers", the person already down being the scorer. And the scorer is in a class of his own. From April to July, upon every occasion when the College turns out to indulge in this pastime, he is to be seen upon his stool in the Pavilion patiently recording the most unromantic and prosaic facts. He is the Individualist. Last of these groups are those whose nostrils quiver and who look at you askance when you mention the word " cricket "—the Nihilists.

We must not judge them too harshly, however, for our games still take place on the Smithfields, a sufficient deterrent to the lukewarm. The outfield is almost waist-high, and although one can see the other fielders when one is out there, it does present some difficulties. It is not always easy to locate where the Sensualists are enjoying their siesta when it is time to tell them that they are to bat next. Then again, the fielders have difficulty in finding the ball. Indeed, I have known some people of very orthodox views driven by their distress to the use of theological terms (to which they attached no doctrinal significance) merely because certain unprintable blades of grass obscured the ball.

But we had our revenge when the Beda College came to meet us in the annual " Derby ", for they were completely ignorant of the many pot-holes we had discovered. I think this accounted for our victory. Upon this occasion our fielding was very poor. Though not an expert in these matters I feel sure we should put in some practice before the next Beda match—but perhaps that would ruin V.E.C. cricket. We have always to cater for the Sensualists and the Occasionalists as well as the Traditionalists, so perhaps we should leave things as they are. If we reformed we might have more Nihilists, and that would never do !

## TENNIS

With the election of this year's Secretary we were given another sad reminder that another year of those who had done some of their course surrounded by the traditional and proper atmosphere of Rome, would soon be leaving us. For at the meeting, the keys of the tennis house at the Villa were handed over to the new Secretary by the last man to hold the office when the College left Rome.

Whether this had the effect of spurring the Club members to greater efforts or not, we cannot say. At any rate during this season we have maintained rather a higher standard of tennis than in the previous year. In the main this higher standard can ultimately be attributed to the fact that during the season we have been given the use of the Mill Court at Stonyhurst for at least four afternoons a week. We take this opportunity of thanking

Fr Roberts S.J. for this kind permission. But the number of players has increased and so our own court was not entirely abandoned, and often both courts were in use at the same time.

Obviously such enthusiasm had to culminate in something worth while, and so co-operating with Mr Wren and Mr Falconer we arranged a match between the Stonyhurst Scholastics and ourselves. There were to be four in each team and the match was to consist of four singles and two doubles. As our respective time-tables did not synchronise the matches had to cover a period of six or seven days. Our team acquitted themselves with honour, and although all our players lost their first set, dogged determination and a will to win gained us the victory in all four singles. However time was getting short and the doubles games had to be abandoned and at the same time a proposed match with the Stonyhurst boys.

In reviewing the season we would say that the additional practice has helped considerably. At present one or two of our players are slightly heavy handed and quite often give a game away where a little restraint would greatly help. But with practice this is a fault easily remedied.

The Secretary for this year is Mr Dixon.

# PERSONAL

It was with great pleasure that we heard of the appointment of Dr Halsall (1924—1931) as Auxiliary to the Archbishop of Liverpool. His Lordship is no stranger to us here and since the Venerabile has been in England he has often visited us in his capacity as Vice-Rector of the Beda College. We have become accustomed to look on him as a fellow-exile and although we may be a little sorry that he will not now be a companion on the return journey to Rome we offer him our sincere congratulations and prayers. *Ad multos annos !*

During the past year we were pleased to receive a visit from His Lordship Bishop Ellis (1916—1923) who ordained the subdeacons at Whitsun. We would like to take this opportunity to thank His Lordship for the loan of another consignment of books, that have helped to enrich several sections of our library. Bishop Parker of Northampton was another welcome guest last term.

We have to record some changes in the staff of the College. Fr Charles Hughes S.J. has left us and returned to Heythrop where he is waiting to be called out to Rome, and Fr van de Poel S.J. has now gone to Saint Beuno's. In their place we welcome Fr J. Rea Ph.D., D.D. (1926—1934) who is now teaching Dogmatic Theology, and Fr T. J. E. Lynch Ph.D., D.D. (1926—1934) who is teaching Sacred Scripture and History of Philosophy. We are also expecting Fr R. P. Redmond Ph.D., D.D. (1926—1934) some time in November.

Other new appointments include :

Very Rev. Canon McNarney (1919—1926) to Sacred Heart, Ashton.

Rev. B. Grimley D.D. (1915—1922) to St Mary's, Boston, Lincs.

Rev. V. Marsh D.D. (1928—1935) to Blessed Sacrament, Aintree, Liverpool.

Rev. B. Pearson (1930—1937) to Ursuline Convent, Brentwood.

Rev. P. McEnroe (1935—1942) to St Joseph's, Grovehill, Middlesbrough.

Rev. L. Hanlon (1935—1942) to Louvain University.

Rev. D. Roche (1936—1943) to St Mary's, Cadogan Gardens, Chelsea.

Rev. T. P. Fooks B.A. (1940—1944) to St Edmund of Canterbury, Beckenham.

Those ordained last year have been appointed as follows :

Mr P. Kelly to St Edward's, Golders Green.
Mr T. Sowerby to St Mary's, Warwick Bridge, Carlisle.
Mr J. Campbell to Maynooth University.
Mr J. Groarke to St Edmund's House, Cambridge.
Mr W. Buxton to Our Lady's, Carlisle.
Mr A. Clark to St Philip Neri, Arundel.

During the last six months there has been a change of Rectors at Stonyhurst, Fr Belton S.J. having resigned on account of ill health. We will always remember the kindness with which he received the Venerabile when it first came to St Mary's Hall. To him and to his successor, Fr Swindells S.J., we send our best wishes for the future.

The Senior Student is Mr Mark Swaby.

# BOOK REVIEW

*Spiritualism.* By Herbert V. O'Neill, with a Preface by the Archbishop of Liverpool. Present Problem Series. Pp. 144. Burns Oates & Washbourne. 5*s*.

Music and singing, banging and shouts of "Bravo"; dolls and tambourines careering about the air; Red Indians acting as Spirit-controls and speaking broken English: "Yeh, Tomo"; painful groans of the medium; exclamations by the sitters: "Thank you, friend", "O dear, dear spirit, touch me again";—these and many other phenomena all happening in a mysterious (or rather, convenient) darkness, constitute a "Service" of what some would call the Spiritualist Religion and others the Spiritualist Racket.

The mediums can learn the tricks of the trade at a "School for Mediumship", collect information from blue-books, buy the paraphernalia, including cheese-cloth for materialisations, at Woolworth's or more expensively from specialized traders. The spirits seem to come on command, bring birds or ear-rings that are made in Birmingham, and contradict one another gaily about life in the Summer Land. Failures hardly ever happen at public séances, for the medium cannot disappoint and must continue to attract customers (the double-stomached Mrs Duncan could earn over £100 a week); when they do take place in the presence of scientists and under test conditions they are due to "bad conditions" or gate-crashing spirits. And to think that there are in England alone almost three thousand public Spiritualist meetings each Sunday organised by such concerns as the "Marylebone Spiritualist Association Ltd".

All this and many other points are brought out in Fr O'Neill's book, in which he shows up the hollowness and fraudulence of Spiritualism, the anti-religious trend and contradictions of both spirits and Spiritualists. Fr O'Neill knows what he is talking about; he has studied the subject for thirty-five years and shows a thorough knowledge of Spiritualist literature. His book, which is written in a popular style, entertaining and convincing, is mainly useful because he has based his writings entirely on the findings, public and private, of accredited and representative leaders of the move-

ment in many countries. Even Spiritualists ought to be converted by it. He makes a special point of showing that Spiritualism is not a religion. But putting it in the form of an equation: Spiritualism = Psychical Research + Hymns (p. 132) is doing it too much honour. Spiritualism as a movement has nothing to do with Psychical Research, while a scientist who turns Spiritualist usually ceases to be an unprejudiced enquirer. Nor are " The Big Bad Wolf ", " You are my Sunshine " or " Pop goes the Weasel " exactly hymns.

As a reviewer we should like to make one or two other remarks. On page 112 we find a Latin, and on page 126 an Italian quotation which are not translated. The Creery children (p. 70) are an unfortunate example of thought-transference, because the girls *and* their servant-maid apparently took in Professor Sir William Barnett and other scientists by their " mind-reading " performance (cf. H. Price, *Fifty Years of Psychical Research*, p. 167). Lastly, is " rareness " of the essence of a miracle ? Is it not sufficient for an event to be " praeter ordinem naturae ", to cause astonishment and to show that God is its Author ?

It remains to be pointed out that the book is one-sided, that it does not treat of the two per cent possibly genuine phenomena, but only of the ninety-eight per cent that is fraudulent. This, however, is not a criticism. The author explicitly mentions that his book is not an essay on psychical research. It is a warning to those who want to dabble in Spiritualism and see their grandmother for 5*s*. or their fiancé for 12*s*. 6*d*. If they spend 5*s*. on purchasing this book, they will see much more.

J. VAN DE POEL S.J.

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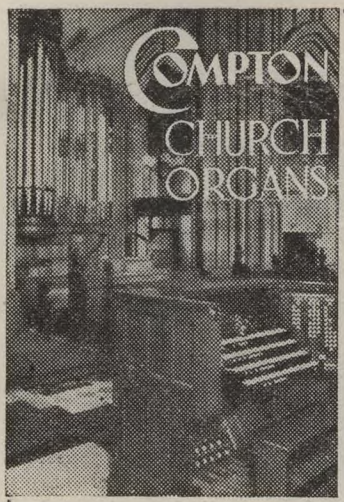


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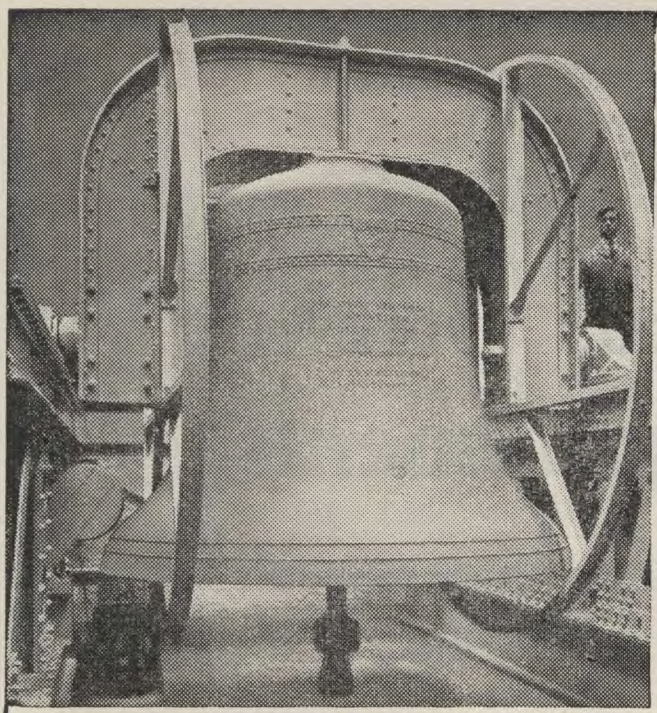

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