

An indefinite but strong nostalgia for the things which are locked somewhere beyond reach occupies the mind, and as Dante says, "This is the time for the break off of the feelings of the soul." In his poem "La Divina Commedia", Dante also speaks of the relation between sunset and day's labor, and of the necessity which urges one to communicate with the unknown of the life after death. There is everything in these beautiful verse of canto 11 of the "Inferno": "Lo giorno se n'andava e l'aere bruno . . .".

These are the moments when man feels the strong relation between God and himself, and when he is filled with the spirit of the mystery of creation. It is the time when mortal man feels and realizes his solitude, and a vague questioning of the reason for his existence bothers his mind, he again realizes his weakness and solemnly turns his mind and thoughts to God. That is why with solemnity and gratitude—which inspire poets and painters—all direct their evening prayers to God,—the Christian, the Hebrew, the Moslem and the Indian.

Sunset, the bell calls the Christians and the "Muezin" calls the faithful Mohammedans to express their faith and gratitude to God.

Sunset, the sailor on the Adriatic sea or elsewhere in the Mediterranean sings his traditional and expressive hymn, the "Ave Maria".

Sweetly sad and beautiful sunset—but the sun will rise again and the silence of the night will be replaced by the life and hopes of the day; and one hopes to live and see another day and enjoy another sunset.

—G. A. L. '51.

- BOOK REVIEW -

OUR LADY OF FATIMA

William Thomas Walsh

New York, The MacMillan Company, 1947. (228 pps.)

Mr. Walsh was born in Connecticut in 1891, and was graduated from Yale in 1913. Before he turned to writing books he was engaged as a newspaper reporter. He is considered a competent authority on Spanish history, and is the author of *Isabella of Spain* and *Philip II*. He has also been successful with other literary forms; his *Lyric Poems* were published in 1939 and he has written several good plays. He won the Laetere Medal in 1941.

His **Our Lady of Fatima** is a simple, yet moving, factual account of the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin at Fatima, in Portugal, during 1917. The story of the apparitions is retold through Sister Maria das Dores, who as Lucy Abóbora was the principal witness and the only one now living.

It is certain that not enough is known of these extraordinary events. The three apparitions of 1915, those of the Angel of Peace in 1916, and those of Our Blessed Lady in 1917 have been the subject of much abuse and misinformation. This author's account can be said to have cleared up many questionable points. Upon reading this book you will find out in a delightful manner just what Our Lady predicted and what she promised to the three children who were given the privilege of seeing her. The author's minuteness of detail and his skill as a story teller make one feel as though one were an actual spectator of this wonderful manifestation of power. You can almost feel yourself one of that vast, surging throng of October 13th, 1917, when was performed the miracle which turned to lies the "scientific" explanations of those who doubted the existence and power of God.

Early in life little Lucia Abóbora showed signs of holiness. She exercised a great influence over her two cousins and constant companions, Jacinta and Francisco Marto. As we follow the children over the arid, hilly, countryside in search of pasture for their sheep, as we dwell on their lowliness and insignificance in this vast world of ours, as we stand amazed at the wondrous visions it was permitted them to see, we become completely absorbed in the story and in its message for the world. We are given a good insight into the lives of the Portuguese people, their deep-rooted faith in God and their devotion to His Blessed Mother. They take particular pride in the fact that they have always called their country "terra de Santa Maria."

All the human elements are here: the incredulity of Lucia's father, the unsympathetic attitude of the rest of the family, which hurt her very much; on the other hand, the gentle and upright character of Ti Marto, Jacinta's father, who scrupulously avoided saying anything which might hurt the feelings of his children; the threats and persecutions of the civilian authorities—all this adds to the human interest of the book.

One of the more uncertain points in the past concerned Our Lady's words about Russia. It was during her third visit, July 13th, that she asked for the consecration of Russia to her Immaculate Heart. This, in the opinion of Sister Maria, has not been done, although the present pontiff consecrated the world to her in 1942.

The most awe inspiring visit of all was the last one on Oct. 13th., when a miracle was performed for 70,000 people. What a fearful blow to unbelief! What a triumph for the Supernatural in this age

which scoffs at such things with unbridled fury! The transformed sun literally "danced" in the sky, whirled and descended to the ground-hugging crowd in zigzag fashion as a mighty rocket. This lasted for some ten minutes, then it ascended and took its place again in the heavens.

Perhaps such events and their account may do more than anything else to instill a vital, living faith in the minds of Catholics throughout the world. At least it is something for us to think about. Read this book and see.

—WILFRED J. DRISCOLL '50.

THE TIN FLUTE

Gabrielle Roy

New York, Reynal & Hitchcock, 1947. (315 pps)

Saint Henri, a slum section of Montreal, is the scene of this depressing novel about the poor by Gabrielle Roy. A native of Manitoba and of French Canadian stock, Miss Roy taught school for a short time and then went to London to study for the stage. In 1939, however, she returned to Canada to fulfill a childhood ambition by becoming an author. During various trips through that section of Montreal which is called Saint Henri, she became fascinated with its people and characters and decided to write a novel about them.

Florentine Lacasse, the oldest girl in a large family, works in a five-and-ten cent store to assist in the support of her parents, brothers and sisters. She is pretty but, due to improper nutrition, very thin. Some of the men who visit the store during meal hours attempt to gain her favour. Not until Jean Levesque, a young machinist with great ambitions and loose morals, enters her life, does she fully realize how desperately she wants to escape from the poverty symbolized by her run-down shack of a home bordering on the railway tracks. Other suitors appear, especially Emmanuel; but Jean is the leading contender: Emmanuel lacks glamour.

Interwoven with Florentine's love problems, is the over-stressed struggle of her family for the meagre necessities of life: the pinching of pennies by Rose Anna, Florentine's mother; the annual spring house-hunting as the landlord becomes impatient for the rent; the optimistic attitude of Azarius, Rose Anna's husband, on the prospects of a suitable job; Eugene's indifference towards his mother; little Daniel's sickness; and little Yvonne's yearning for a warm coat so that she can attend daily Mass (one of the few scenes where any reference is made to the spiritual side of life).

With the advent of World War II, the unemployment question, at least for the Lacasses', is solved. Now, with two in the armed forces, Rose Anna will live in comparative comfort.

There are no outstanding scenes in this novel because it is not an outstanding novel: it is totally devoid of humour; French Canadians are depicted as going to war solely for the economic gain to be derived thereon; and the characterization, with probably one or two exceptions, is very poor. This last weakness gives the reader the impression that the persons connected with the story are unreal; on many occasions they do not seem to act like ordinary human beings at all. Miss Roy's best attempt at characterization is realized, probably, in the person of Emmanuel's mother, a minor character in the story. And, oh yes . . . the translator has done a good job in translating from the original French.

The jacket synopsis states that this novel is "probably the most authentic picture of the working class to come out of Canada." The poor working class!

With so many better books around, this novel is not recommended to anyone, and those who sing the praises of **The Tin Flute** are invited to read it . . . just once more,

—Ed.

MORALS IN POLITICS AND PROFESSIONS

Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R.

Westminster, Maryland, The Newman Bookshop, 1946. (187 pps)

This book was written primarily for the instruction and guidance of Catholics in public life, that is for those whose positions in political and professional life give them authority or influence over their fellow citizens. The need for men of honesty and integrity in American public life is great, and Catholics, by reason of their faith, are well fitted to fill this need. The means by which a Catholic in public life can learn of his duties and obligations are not readily available, and consequently an answer to the complex problems of modern society is sometimes beyond the scope of an ordinary layman. This book not only attempts to present answers, but to provide a mode of action, for Catholics in meeting these problems.

The author of **Morals In Politics And Professions** is the well known educator and writer, the Very Rev. F. J. Connell, who since 1940 has been Associate Professor of Moral Theology at The Catholic University of America, in Washington, D. C. He has been a steady contributor to several publications, including **The**

American Ecclesiastical Review, in which most of the chapters of this book appeared during 1944-1945. He is the author of several books, and his pamphlets on doctrinal subjects are well known.

As stated in the introduction, the greater part of this book is devoted to explaining the ethical obligations of those who hold civil offices, either by election or appointment. The remainder deals with the moral problems of professional persons who hold responsible positions in the community, which give them influence—for good or evil. Father Connell further states that his purpose has been not only to supply answers for the problems considered, but, as far as possible, to give the reasons for his answers.

Dishonesty and graft are prominent features in public life to-day, so much so, that for many they are the accepted and approved forms of action. The Catholic politician, legislator, judge, and policeman are bound to refrain from graft and dishonesty, under any form that they may appear, in the administration of their duties. Legal, Commutative, and Distributive Justice, and the ethical obligations which they impose, are treated comprehensively in this book. If democracy is to function properly much will depend on a revival of morality in public officials, and a renewal of respect for them and their offices by the people. Anyone who reads this book will readily see this.

Many and difficult are the problems which Catholic doctors, nurses, lawyers, social service workers, and school teachers have to contend with in the daily discharge of their duties. Many of them, educated in the materialistic atmosphere of secular universities, lack a firm grounding in Catholic morals, which further aggravates their difficulties in solving these problems. The necessity of a thorough knowledge of his moral obligations is particularly true in the case of a doctor, surrounded as he is by the militant advocates of birth control, euthanasia, abortion, and artificial insemination. Catholics in all walks of life, professional or otherwise, must come to a realization of the need of social justice and charity in the world to-day. The sublime teachings of the Church provide us with ample opportunities to practice these virtues. The final chapter of this book is entitled **Social Justice And Charity**, and should be read by all.

Morals In Politics And Professions, constituting as it does a definite contribution to Moral Theology in its particular field, is intended not only for those in public and professional life, but also for the use and benefit of the clergy. The scanty treatment of the ethical obligations and moral problems of these Catholics in standard texts of Moral Theology has made the task of the clergy in admonishing and guiding this group more difficult. For this reason this book will be especially welcomed by pastors, confessors, and spiritual guides.

All of us ought to read this lucidly written book. It will not only broaden our knowledge of the duties and obligations of those in political and professional life, but will deepen our respect for these people and the positions they occupy. What is more important it will give us a clearer conception of our duties as citizens and as Christians.

—ARTHUR McINNIS '50.

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ANNUAL C. F. C. C. S. CONVENTION

St. Dunstan's sent two delegates, Mr. A. P. Campbell, M.A., and Wilf. Driscoll, to the Annual C. F. C. C. S. convention held at Loyola College, Montreal, during the weekend of Oct. 24-26th. As this was actually a convention of the units of the Central