

THE METAPHYSICAL MIND

The spirit which melancholy does pervade,
 Is best disposed for contemplative aid;
 For thought in a mind least exists
 When clouded in an emotional mist.
 And order unto order does decree
 That level of being be in similarity;
 Ere we in justice do assert
 That comparison be only in their worth.
 So, if two unlike subjects do embrace,
 Their relative truths do each eface.
 For it is, indeed, treason
 To castigate reason
 Which is life to the being
 From the power of seeing.
 The garden of thought is to common sense
 As the soul to recompense;
 Each to be rightly cultivated;
 Should to its end be elevated.
 The mind the soul's beauty does enhance
 If it be given but a chance.
 So, tread the hallowed halls of thought
 To share the joys of a pure mind wrought.

—THE SCARRED BARD—

News Item:

The other night when the lights went out during the Nurses' Dance at the Rollaway, Jim Reddin is said to have had to resort to a little bit of celestial navigation as the music went on. He saw two cigarettes glowing on the opposite side of the hall, and by keeping one of them sighted over each shoulder of his dancing partner, he was able to keep track of his position. He confided later that when somebody butted one of the cigarettes he almost went crashing into the orchestra.

"Our chief want in life is somebody who shall make us do what we can." —EMERSON.

A ROCKING-HORSE CATHOLIC

By Caryll Houselander, Sheed and Ward, New York, N.Y. 1955.
 148 Pp. \$2.50

Lovers of Caryll Houselander's books will enjoy the last book she wrote shortly before her death in 1955. In *A Rocking Horse Catholic* we learn some thing of the background of this remarkable

woman whose books were a source of edification and inspiration to many people. This book is an exposition of the strange paths along which she finally arrived at a true, pure, enlightened love of Christ and His Mystical Body.

It is not strictly an autobiography. It does not bother with dates and names of persons and places. Even her own personality does not emerge into clear focus. It was not her purpose to reveal herself, but rather the strange way in which the providence of God prepared her for her mission. When she tells of her childhood, adolescence, and womanhood, we have a factual and touching picture of an unique personality and unusual upbringing.

She writes about her childhood days, "sunny if not sometimes terrifying," in a delightful, humorous way, and one reads, chuckling and wondering at the implications. Neither of her parents had any particular religion when she was baptized in the Catholic Church at the age of six, and it was done largely on the advice of a family friend who was himself an agnostic. She says, "I am not a 'cradle' Catholic, but a 'rocking-horse' Catholic."

After her parents' divorce, she was shunted from school to a nursing home, to yet other schools, staying nowhere long enough to learn any lessons. It is little wonder that she became a singular, neurotic, and bewildered child. She was suddenly called home to assist her mother, who was working with the care of a derelict priest, who found shelter in her home. She was ostracized by the few Catholic friends she had, and finally left both the Church and her home because of the unkindness of those who called themselves "good Catholics".

Then followed a period of spiritual and physical starvation while she lived a sort of Bohemian life with artists and as an artist. It was during this period of trial and keen suffering that she developed her stature as a person. As she began to see Christ in others, she determined to change her own pharisaical attitude.

The book ends with her return to the Church. The theme in this book, as in most of the books she has written, is—the presence of Christ in men. Miss Houselander's story is an absorbing narrative, written in a simple, unaffected way that will fascinate her readers.

—SISTER MARGARET MARIE, C.S.M.—

BEAUTIFULLY BELGIAN

Anyone wishing to make contact with Belgians should remember above all that two ethnic groups are involved, the Flemings and the Walloons. During a period of travel this past summer, under the auspices of the R.C.N., and after a period of seasickness, I was able to realize one of my ambitions—to see a part of Europe.

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