

- BOOK REVIEWS -

CARDINAL MINDSZENTY, THE STORY OF A MODERN MARTYR

Bela Fabian

Scribners, 1949

(203 pp.)

Once, when riding through Budapest, Cardinal Mindszenty's car was stoned by a group of Communist trouble makers. Instantly Mindszenty stopped his car, got out and faced the mob. "If you want to stone the Church," he cried, "stone me. I am the Church." The mob scattered.

From these words, you can get a small concept of the Cardinal's fearless opposition to any form of totalitarian government; government which would erase man's Christian and democratic rights. Born Joseph Pehm (a German name) he took the name of his native village Mindszenty, in defiance of a Nazi campaign to induce Hungarians of German descent to drop their Hungarian names and resume their old German names.

This book is the first complete biography of Cardinal Mindszenty in English. The author, Bela Fabian is a Hungarian Jew. He is well qualified to write the life story of Mindszenty, having known him for years as well as being in official contact with him as a member of the Hungarian Parliament and President of the Independent Democratic Party. Fabian also worked with Mindszenty to prevent racial persecutions by the Nazis, and is able to refute any charges of anti-semitism brought against him at the trial. As a State official he was familiar with events in Hungary.

He tells the story of Mindszenty from the time of his birth to the time of his "death". Mindszenty was born a peasant and worked hard in the fields as a youth. After he became a priest he built up a reputation as a defender of his people against any form of persecution, whether religious or racial. The world has remembered Pope Pius' prophetic words to him when he was made a Cardinal in 1946. "You may be the first whose red blood will

stain the blood-red of the Cardinal's cap". It has also remembered, and will never forget the news of his arrest, his "trial" and conviction—and his sentence. Was he tortured? If so, how? Was he drugged? If so, what sort of drug was used? Is his widely published confession authentic? These are questions which have arisen in the minds of everyone. The answers may be found in this book by Bela Fabian.

There is one part of it at least which may be criticized; the author quotes Mindszenty as saying " . . . the deepening of the traditional adoration of the Blessed Virgin. The word "devotion" should be substituted for "adoration". The book is recommended to you. It is truly the **Story of a Modern Martyr**.

—FRED COYLE '52

THE THREE WISHES OF JAMIE McRUIN

Charles O'Neal

New York

Julian Messner Inc., 1949

(248 pp.)

"I'm a nobody, Father, but they do wonderful things in this country—as wonderful as the fairies do at home. I'll be somebody. You wait and see."

"I'll be somebody." A very wild and infantile statement? Probably incapable of fulfillment? Perhaps to the ordinary man—but not to Jamie McRuin, the little "nobody" from old Ireland. Why might these aims seem far fetched for the ordinary man and not for Jamie? Well, you see, its because the ordinary man does not have the help Jamie had. What help? Why no other assistant than Una, Queen of the Fairies, who because he dreamt of her thrice in his dreams, granted Jamie three wishes.

You don't believe in fairies and such stuff and nonsense? Well, to be perfectly truthful neither did I—until I read about Jamie's fairy and her three wishes. Then I began to think about them somewhat more seriously and I finally reached the conclusion that they do exist. And, upon finishing the book, I had little choice but to believe in them. Its true that they aren't airy figures who float on air and seem to be everywhere and nowhere at the same time. They do exist nevertheless. They exist in the form of good thoughts; of good works; of acts of true love

such as complete and willing self-surrender; and in many other forms of charity and justice—but I guess I'd better not say too much, or you won't have anything to discover about them for yourself when **you** read this book.

Suffice it to say that these fairies are not a mere figment of Jamie's imagination.

Follow his story—from the time Una grants him the wishes in far off Ireland—to the time they are all fulfilled in America, and you will discover the validity of this statement.

What are these three wishes that I've been talking about? Number one is for travel. This wish, you will find, is very adequately fulfilled. Number two is for a good and beautiful wife, "a girl of his own choosing". This too is amply fulfilled. The third is for a son—"a son of the old sod". This—. Well that would be going too far.

However this much I will tell you. If you want pure, good, laughable humour; if you want exciting adventure; if you want tenderness "that'll tear the very heart out of ye"; if, in short, you want all the qualities that make a great story great, plus an underberd of Christian thought and ideals claimed by so little of our modern literature—don't fail to follow the paths of the Speaker, Maeve, Keven and Jamie as they wend their way through the **Three Wishes of Jamie McRuin**.

Having done this you will not find it hard to understand why this book was chosen, from among thousands, winner of the five-thousand dollar Christopher award.

—BERNARD HAYES '52