

Ainsi le jeune homme de vingt ans, qui est au seuil de la vie, reporte ses regards dans le passé; il revoit, par le souvenir, les joies naïves et sereines, les espoirs chimériques de sa première jeunesse. Il s'aperçoit que déjà beaucoup de ses rêves ont disparu comme les feuilles desséchées, emportées par le vent. Ce lui semble que plus il avance en âge, plus les jours passent vite. Cependant, il sent toujours vibrer dans tout son être, la vertu et l'ardeur de ses vingt ans. Il a le désir de faire le bien et de vivre pour d'autres, parce qu'il a une grande soif du bonheur.

Bien que regardant avec regret les joies de l'enfance, il marche, le cœur et l'âme remplis de joie et de virilité vers l'idéal fixé, désirant assouvir sa soif de bonheur.

Heureux donc celui qui sait profiter des heures automnales pour ranimer son courage et se préparer un avenir souriant. Par ces heures de réflexions, il apprendra à bien vivre, ayant toujours devant les yeux son Créateur; à vivre non seulement pour lui-même mais pour les autres. Ainsi, à ceux qui le suivront, il laissera l'exemple de sa vie.—

—JEAN-CHARLES PATRY '49

- BOOK REVIEWS -

SOULS AT STAKE

Francis J. Ripley and F. S. Mitchell

New York, Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., 1948, (198 p.)

This book is the product of the combined efforts of two outstanding contemporary exponents of Catholic Action—one a priest, the other a layman. The priest is Rev. Francis J. Ripley of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. His lay associate writes under the "nom de plume" of F. S. Mitchell, the same name given by his fellow Irish revolutionists of a generation ago. Many who are acquainted with his work in the field of Catholic Action are firmly convinced that it will surpass the accomplishments of the great Frederick Ozanam, whom he followed as a youth.

Mr. Mitchell's contribution to **Souls at Stake** includes chapters three to nine, which are the edited versions of a series of talks delivered by him in Dublin, and appearing in the **Maria Legionis**. This, Father Ripley explains in the introduction, accounts for the familiar style found in much of the book. The retention of this personal tone has maintained the directness of the original talks, and added to the readability of the book.

In Chapter Two, which is entitled "**Modern Roads To Chaos**" Father Ripley asks and answers the following questions: "What is wrong with the world today?", and "How can it be made right again?" From his examination of the failure of moderns in the fields of politics, social organization, education, culture and religion, we are led to the inescapable conclusion that our neglect of God is the root cause of the malignant disorder in the world to-day.

The cure of this disorder lies in the return to God. Man must embrace the spirit and teachings of Christ and His Church. This will be achieved only if we answer the Church's "call of all her members to the apostolate under the general title of Catholic Action.", The principle object of this book is, therefore, to outline the ideals and norms of Catholic Action. Father Ripley points out that **Souls At Stake** is not designed to be critical or controversial. Some may disagree with the authors' views in regard to the nature of Catholic Action, which is still in its infancy, but they should not infer criticism or condemnation of existing systems or movements.

Father Ripley pointedly states that the Legion of Mary, whose importance many of us in our ignorance minimize, is the most successful apostolic movement in the Church to-day. He then outlines twenty-seven points which he maintains should characterize the ideal lay apostolic movement.

The second object of this book is to inspire many Catholics to begin to discharge the duties incumbent on them as members of the Mystical Body of Christ, and to give them guidance in the technique they should employ. All of us must realize that we have the obligation of carrying on Christ's work of the salvation of souls. The best way in which this can be done is active participation in the lay apostolate.

Let anyone who thinks that his obligations in this respect are satisfied by a few hurried, sporadic prayers read the chapter on **Apathy Versus Grace** and **Unapostolic Catholicism an Anamoly** and he will soon realize how wrong he has been. Mr. Mitchell states that prayer alone is not sufficient, rather it must be the prelude to and the complement of action. His final chapter is an excellent discussion on marriage, concerning which there are many false notions to-day. He stresses marriage not for comfort, but for sacramental achievement.

Of Father Ripley's last four chapters, each of which is replete with sound theoretical thought and its practical applications, the concluding one is particularly important. It is entitled **True Devotion To Mary A Necessary Ingredient**, and it shows clearly the all important part which Mary plays in the scheme of salvation. When we consider Mary's part in our redemption, Her position as the Mediatrix of all graces, we must conclude that we are dependant upon her for all graces, accomplishments and progress, not only in our personal sanctification, but also in our work as Catholic Actionists. "A life utterly, totally, entirely, and absolutely dependent upon our Mother" is the impression Father Ripley would have made upon every apostle.

In concluding his article on this book entitled "**Unique Book With A Most Apt Title**", Rev. Dr. J. P. Donovan, Kenrick Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., states that **Souls At Stake** is "a book I have waited for these twenty years. It lights up the whole field of contemporary pastoral theology. Priests will want to get it and meditate upon its contents; seminarians will devour it; and lay persons, men and women, and youth, even high school pupils, will read and reread it, and in doing so they will hear in numerous cases the Saviour's invitation. The authors have built to themselves an indestructible monument, transmitting over the ages in their own personalities the call to save souls pronounced by the Saviour in the days of His mortality."

—ARTHUR F. McINNIS '50

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A NOBODY

N. B. James

Toronto,

J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd.

1947 (239 p.)

As the title of this book might suggest (if it suggests anything) this story concerns no particular individual. It contains no moral, and it has no purpose other than perhaps to make people chuckle. The author, although a member of the Alberta Legislative Assembly, likes to think of himself as a nobody amidst countless other nobodies, and portrays himself as being as unrespectable and irresponsible as possible.

Mr. James begins his story with a short summary of his family history, and (very strangely) ends up with himself. He describes his boyhood days in England as being about the same as that of other boys, except that he was different from other boys,

and consequently was treated in a different, if not a less favorable, manner. It was during this stage of his development that he acquired an allergy to teachers and professors, which he holds even to this day, although to a lesser degree. His parents, after giving up all hope of his becoming a scholar of any eminence, decided to send him to one of the "colonies"—to Canada.

Accordingly, in 1893, young Norman James landed in Halifax, where for some unknown reason he was urged to keep going west as far as possible. A few days later, he found himself in the southern part of Alberta, where in those days, they called a man a boy, "until he's dead". It took him some time to get accustomed to the habits of the people and to understand their rugged hospitality. But he mastered all this in a surprisingly short time, considering who he was. Later on he even became quite attached to this life in the raw.

Like most pioneers, Mr. James tackled many odd jobs such as digging sewers in below zero weather, and trying to farm an area of land that was nothing but a pile of rocks. Although he never made a success of farming or ranching, still he got much enjoyment out of going through the performance. He served in World War I, during which time he spent most of his time peeling potatoes. He also remarks that he married during his wanderings, and, he says, "Strangely enough, I haven't regretted it."

He tried his best to escape politics, since he wished to remain unrespectable, but he finally did get mixed up in them. Even politics, however, did not swell his ego, if that is conceivable. Since 1935 he has served as a Social Creditor in Alberta, and has gotten a big kick out of it, as indeed he did in anything he undertook.

In this book, the author describes the "West" in an original and amusing manner. There is a laugh on every page. If the main purpose of this book is to divert one's mind from the tragedies of this life and to look at its lighter side, it is admirably fulfilled. Read it, and enjoy it yourself.

—L. O'HANLEY, '51