

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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It was only after a considerable amount of skillful maneuvering and flag salutes to ships of many nations that we finally berthed in one of the busiest ports in the world, Antwerp (English), Anvers (French), or Antwerpen as the Flemings call it. Antwerp, having a population of approximately 300,000 offers the tourist a multitude of splendid treasures. Not only is it celebrated for its Zoological Garden, but in the old section of the city one can easily behold its tremendous cathedral, a masterpiece of Gothic Architecture with its spire soaring 400 feet into the sky. The imposing interior, devoid of seats, displays perspectives seldom seen. It contains the three well-known paintings by Peter Rubens; the "Elevation of the Cross", the "Descent from the Cross" and the "Assumption of the Virgin". Needless to say, I spent many hours in the examination of each detail. There was one detail, however, which I thought very interesting. On the floor of the cathedral could easily be seen huge slabs of marble which sheltered the many bishops of "La Cathédrale Notre Dame" who passed away during the centuries. One could see that seldom did people trod on the marble slabs for the intervening spaces were so worn as to show a considerable difference in level over the entire floor. Other notable features of the Cathedral are to be found in its exquisite wood carvings and in the fact that there may be observed a narrow strip of brass plating embedded in marble and running directly across its floor to mark the Meridian of Greenwich. In addition to the Cathedral, the Plantin Museum with its picturesque Butcher's Hall, gardens and the house of Rubens as well as the Royal Art Museum are indeed well worth the consideration of a visit. It may be of some interest to know that the Plantin Museum houses the entire printing press of Christophe Plantin, who was in time to produce volumes of such marvelous design and skill as to merit for it great renown throughout Europe during the 16th century. Plantin was buried in 1589 in Notre Dame Cathedral mentioned above.

It was through the friendliness of the Belgian Government that we were able to visit Waterloo and to stretch our minds into the past in order to envisage the happenings that were unfolded in the world-shaking Battle of Waterloo. With the excellent assistance of a Belgian army general, we were given a very detailed explanation of how the forces that took part in the battle were stationed; he enumerated with painstaking care the sequence of events. Here, he narrated what I thought to be a rather interesting tale. He claimed that a nearby Catholic cemetery had been robbed of its skulls. The reason for this was the fact that the people of Waterloo had been receiving money for the sale of the skulls of the Battle's victims as souvenirs to influential people, particularly in England, and now they were out of skulls. So they hit upon the idea of robbing the skulls of those who were not even victims of the battle.

Apart from Antwerp and Waterloo, it was due to efficient and speedy methods of transportation that I had the great fortune of

being able to visit Bruges, Ghent and Brussels. In order not to bore the reader, I shall briefly give an account of the highlights in each of these.

Bruges, a small mediaeval town and the furthest point of my departure from Antwerp was certainly the most historical and romantic sights one could wish to see. As I visualize it now, I can see myself wandering alone down its narrow cobble-stoned streets in the direction of its majestic cathedral, since it was the most prominent structure and I didn't know exactly where I was heading. In the proximity of the cathedral, the sight of the slow-moving waters of the canals with swans drifting dreamily on the Lac D'Amour, and the thin notes of the bell of the Beguinage would make one stand in awe and admiration at the works of God. Truly, it is a romantic town, so peaceful and full of the history of the Middle Ages. Little has been done to alter its appearance since that great creative period.

On my way back from Bruges, I chanced to pause for a moment in Ghent, city of flowers. In the very heart of Ghent the three towers of St. Bavon, the Belfry and St. Nicolas are a most imposing sight. Apart from its museums, architectural structures, and flowers, the city does not offer much in beauty. This is due in part to the effect that industrial advancement has had upon it. Factories have arisen to mar or hide its true beauty.

Desirous of visiting Brussels, the Belgian capital before the expiration of my "48 hours off", I did not remain long in Ghent. So, having spent a peaceful night in "l'Hotel Mirabeau" in Brussels, I set out comparatively early the next morning to examine and photograph some parts of this very rich city. It was in this city alone that I had the opportunity to speak to a Belgian who shared my interests. I met him under rather curious circumstances. I was, at the time, engrossed in turning knobs and taking a light reading for a photograph of the "Cathédrale de S. Michele et de S. Gudule" when I suddenly noticed that one of the passers-by had stopped and was staring at me. He first addressed me in German, no doubt because of the fact that I was toiling with a German camera and that he possessed one similar. I explained in French, since many of the Belgians speak French, that I did not understand him. He immediately threw his hands in the air, as most Frenchmen do when speaking and at times when not speaking, and uttered a discourse so fast in that tongue as to make one stand in amazement. However, I then felt more at home. We introduced ourselves and he proceeded to lead me through dark narrow alleys to show me sights that I would surely have missed, giving me at the same time a brief history of Brussels and its people. During our brief walk, since he was on his way to work and did not want to be late, he pointed out to me carved figures on old dwellings of the masters who had once lived in them during the Middle Ages. Most of these dwellings had now been renovated into restaurants, but the figures still remained intact. Following this adventure we

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proceeded to "Le Petit Sablon", an old but beautiful little chapel and then to a park nearby, fenced off with sculptured columns embodying the figures of masters of the numerous guilds which had once existed in Brussels during the Middle Ages. It was at this park that we separated. I spent the rest of my sojourn in Brussels visiting the "Palais de Justice", a museum and peering through a wrought-iron fence at the Royal Palace.

Needless to say, I was a bit fatigued after all these escapades and I found myself quite content to board ship once again despite the fact that I felt that I would soon be leaving the "Terra firma" for the sea not so "firma".

—HENRY GAUDET '57—

OUR FAIR ISLAND

In the gulf of old Saint Lawrence
There's an island fair to see.
It's cradled snugly on the waves
In sweet tranquility.

There is beauty there beyond compare
With any other land,
And thousands spend their leisure
On it's shores of silver sand.

It is a garden paradise
For it's soil is rich and rare;
And the people there are kind,
And seem not to have a care.

It's the nicest little island
That the eye has ever seen
Of Canada's ten provinces
It surely is the queen.

It is there we grow potatoes
And red strawberries too
And lobsters fresh and tasty
For export and for you.

You may boast of many mountains
And your western brawn and brain
You may boast of rolling prairies
And your fields of golden grain.