

MASSES in the Rochester Diocese

ST. ANNE'S, BAPTIST CHURCH, ST. BONAFAVE, ST. MARGARET MARY'S, ST. MICHAEL'S, ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, SACRED HEART, OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL

BELIEVE IT - - Not

By REV. OWEN B. McGUIRE, D.D.

(Continued from Page One)

wide profound knowledge; but I am an old man—or getting old—and I have seen more of Ireland than most people who will read these lines.

wrote a history of Irish Labor and some other books, all Socialistic and intensely anti-Catholic.

The play and its author have been lauded by the critics in the daily press. Brooks Atkinson in the N. Y. Times: "Nothing so grand has arisen in our impoverished theatre since this reporter began writing of plays."

The same Broadway critics could see nothing in it. But the key to the eulogies of O'Casey's play slips out in what Mr. Atkinson has to say further down in his critique: "If Mr. O'Casey has any specific story, it concerns the poet, the Bishop and the whore . . . She is desperately in need of assistance. The Bishop can give her nothing but sanctimonious counsel. But the poet can give her understanding and share with her the few comforts that are his."

I told you not to look for politics in this writing. I must now tell you not to look for dramatic criticism either. A play may be great as a drama and yet be thoroughly un-Catholic, even thoroughly anti-Christian. We have an example in Shaw's "Saint Joan." All who have seen it staged, and among them many critics who are Catholics, say that it is a grand, splendid drama. On the stage it appeals to the imagination and the emotions as well as to the intelligence, and the majority of people who go to the theater are led by their imagination and emotions more than by their intelligence.

But Shaw's play in cold print, with its preface of 63 pages, is a thoroughly bad and anti-Catholic book. Shaw himself confesses it: "There are fashions and family habits in belief; and it happens that, my fashion being Victorian and my family habit Protestant, I find myself unable to attach any objective validity to Joan's visions. In other words, his fashion and habit excludes everything supernatural in the life of Saint Joan. As to her condemnation, his main contention is that it was necessary. She had a fair trial, he contends, and her judges did their duty as Catholics! Mr. O'Casey's play may be a splendid drama. I don't know whether it is or not. But in cold print, it is a thoroughly bad book and thoroughly anti-Christian, more so than Shaw's "Saint Joan."

Who is Mr. O'Casey? Usually one looks for correct information, at least on matters of fact, in "The Literary Digest." Its article this week on Sean O'Casey is full of inaccuracies. It quotes Mr. O'Casey as saying: "They (the Irish government) refused a grant to the Abbey Theatre, and one reason given was that my plays derided and vilified the Irish people." The Cosgrove Government granted an annual subsidy to the Abbey Theatre; and the de Valera Government continues the grant.

The "Digest" itself says the Abbey Theatre "owed its success and financial well-being largely to O'Casey's plays." That is ridiculous; and, besides, the Abbey Theatre was more successful for years before it staged a play by O'Casey than it has ever been since. The "Digest" further says that when Connolly (a Socialist leader in Dublin) founded the Citizen Army, "O'Casey was one of the first to join." As a matter of fact Connolly's use of the Citizen Army was one of the reasons why O'Casey separated from him. The "Digest" says: "In 1916, when the Easter Rebellion flared, O'Casey was in the thick of it." O'Casey took no part in the Rising of Easter week, and was condemned and ridiculed Connolly for taking part in it with the Citizen Army.

However, it is not to correct the "Digest" that I call your attention to these inaccuracies. It is because I wish to show you what manner of man is Sean O'Casey, and how he came to be what he is; and the corrections I have made in the "Digest" story will help you to understand. James Connolly was, I think, born in Ireland, but he had spent his life in England, where he became a Socialist. He came to Ireland to organize Labor Unions and to fight with the British in the Dublin and London. He was

He organized the Citizen Army for direct action in labor troubles. He was, however, also an Irish Nationalist; and when the time came, he put the Citizen Army at the service of the insurgents. He was one of the signatories of the Proclamation of the Republic, was wounded in the fighting, arrested by the British, and executed by a firing squad. He was a Catholic, and not his Socialism, that the Irish people now remember. But the papers I have referred to make him their hero because of his Socialism and his books.

Now, Sean O'Casey was at first a disciple of Connolly. Connolly made him a Socialist. But he has been more logical than Connolly. Connolly seems to have thought that he could remain a Catholic of some kind, while being a Socialist, just as "Jim" Larkin claims that he can be a Catholic and a Communist too. But such inconsistency was not for Sean O'Casey. He abandoned Catholicity and became, (certainly he was considered), a Communist.

If the laboring class wished to obtain their objective, they must write internationally. There are two things that make them dupes and keep them slaves: Nationalism and "organized Religion." In his Irish plays, those written in Ireland for an Irish public, these, and not "the Irish people," are the two things that he derides and vilifies. I am satisfied that Mr. O'Casey would say so himself. He would, no doubt, deny that he derides or vilifies these or any other thing. He would say that Religion is all right, but is a thing of the individual soul. But the Church, "organized Religion," and Nationalism are the two enemies that he would concede. Hence he could in all sincerity deny, as he did in a debate in Dublin, that he had wished in his plays "to deride and vilify" the insurgents of Easter Week, 1916. His purpose was much more comprehensive. The stage was in Ireland, but the lesson was universal.

I can't understand how any person who sits down to a study of "Juno and the Paycock," or "The Plough and the Stars," can rise from it with any other conception of Mr. O'Casey's mind. Yet the Catholic lady who is the dramatic critic of "America" in listing "the ten best plays of last season" includes "Juno and the Paycock" in the list. Therein is seen the insouciance; and if it so deceives a professional critic, what about you and me?

One more remark. The "Digest" says, this time correctly, that Yeats rejected O'Casey's play, "The Silver Tassie," saying it was not "a good play." The play deals with the World War. The other O'Casey plays, which Yeats gladly put on the Abbey stage, dealt with the Irish Rebellion. "You have no subject," says Yeats, rejecting "The Silver Tassie." "You had the Irish war under your window. But you never walked the battlefields of the Great War." This gave rise to the O'Casey-Yeats controversy, which the "Digest" writer calls "a scorching page in Irish literary history."

Yeats also, like Shaw and O'Casey is anti-Christian; but he never was Catholic. Neither was he ever an Irish Nationalist. Like Shaw's, his "fashion is Victorian and his family habit Protestant." As he has expressed it himself, his purpose in founding the Abbey, was to have Ireland return to her heroic and Pagan antiquity, "as she was before she gave her soul to Greece and Rome and Judea," namely, before she accepted Christianity from "Judea" and entered the European culture that is founded on a Greco-Roman tradition. That was the purpose of the dramas of Yeats, a pupil and protégé of Yeats. His plays will be staged in this country during the season. Lennox Robinson is bringing them over. Robinson is another of the Yeats-Sings type and tradition, of the Anglo-Irish intellectuals who have abandoned the Protestantism of their forebears and whose purpose is not that of these forebears, to convert the "mere Irish" to Bible Protestantism, but to make them good modern Pagans like themselves. This they believe they can do best by juggling with the national sentiment, which is always strong in Ireland, and insidiously teaching the Irish public that the real and true Ireland was that which existed "before she gave her soul to Judea." Now is the time to recover the soul, to rub off the Christianizing. To Yeats, Singe, and Robinson, the Irish are really pagans; it is a vanity which has hidden it for too long that they are not.

But we can return to the subject when Mr. Robinson arrives in Rochester with his Yeats-Sings repertoire. The remark I wish to make here, and which you could not understand without some knowledge of what I

Rev. John Hogan 1887-1934

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Catholic Daughters Have Junior Initiation

Canandaigua. — Initiation ceremonies of Junior Catholic Daughters of America took place Sunday, October 21, with the entrance of 20 new members.

Margaret Moriarty was elected president at a recent meeting; Miss Jeanette Spengler, vice-president; Miss Margaret Walsh, secretary and treasurer, and Miss Azele, reporter. Reorganization of the junior choir was effected with the following members: Marie Bugbee, Madeline Ryan, Elinor Boyle, Mary Sherry, Dorothy Smith, Mary Moran, Marie Feathers, Yolanda De Rosa, Helen Claudius, and Helen McKay.

Catholic Daughters In Auburn Elect Officers

Auburn—Miss Isabel T. Goss has been re-elected grand regent of the Auburn 263 Catholic Daughters of America. Other newly-elected officers who will be installed at the November meeting include: Mrs. Agnes Lane, vice-regent; Mrs. Kathleen Saizer, prophetess; Mrs. Adelaide Risser, monitor; Mrs. Frances Foster, financial secretary; Mrs. Dora Mansfield, lecturer; Mrs. Frances Nollin, historian; Miss Grace Wilde sentinel; Mrs. Lois Gilbert, organist; Mrs. Earl Harding and Mrs. Helen Lawson, trustees.

Brahmin Convert Aids Catholic Action Work

Singapore, (N.W.C. Files)—Mr. Ayer, an Indian recently converted from Brahminism, is now assisting the Most Rev. Bishop Devals, of Singapore, by a series of conferences in English and Tamil which aim to promote the establishment of a strong Catholic Action organization among Indian Catholics throughout the peninsula.

Converts from Brahminism are relatively few but their influence with their countrymen is considerable importance to such men as Mr. Ayer.

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