

He Had Acted Prudently

Men are but stewards of what they possess on earth. They are owners only in a limited sense. They have received of the Lord, and to Him they must make a report on their use of what God has given.

How few act as if they realized this truth! How few give thanks to God for His gift! How many act as if their dominion over money and property and power were something so absolute, so lasting, that no one can question it, no one can even suggest it shall pass away.

The Master praised the Unjust Steward because he had acted prudently. He was unjust because he was making a personal use of the goods of the Master. He acted prudently because he used those goods in a way to help and not to hurt himself.

Men of property today act prudently, when they use their possessions in a way to secure for themselves blessings on earth and in heaven. When they find something for their needy neighbor, each time they dip into their possessions for something for themselves. When they heed the call of humanity, of brotherhood, of Christian charity, and give generously to the welfare of those about them. When they gauge their gifts by God's generosity to them, and not by any mean spirit of selfishness.

He has acted prudently! May the Eternal Judge of all be able to say that of each of us on the Day of Judgment! He shall be able to say it if we look on our holdings in the true light of eternity, if we administer them daily, as the Lord of all, would have us do. Prudence teaches the wise man to so use the things of time as to secure the lasting riches of eternity.

Selected

OUR CONCERN

"The Monitor" (San Francisco) Every Catholic is concerned for the welfare of the Church. Every American is concerned for the welfare of his country. We do not even use the modifying adjective "good" before Catholic, before American.

But the concern of Catholics, who are not good, is to be in a bad way, to be in a bad way, to be in a bad way. Every Catholic is concerned for the welfare of the Church. Every American is concerned for the welfare of his country. We do not even use the modifying adjective "good" before Catholic, before American.

Good Catholics and good Americans will look to the welfare of the Church, before they will look to the welfare of their country. Good Catholics will look to the welfare of the Church, before they will look to the welfare of their country. Good Americans will look to the welfare of their country, before they will look to the welfare of the Church.

"CHRISTIANITY changed the status of woman from man's plaything to his helpmate. In the Christian dispensation she is the queen and mistress of the home and an equal partner with her husband. Part of the world are very slow in catching up with Christianity. An Arab will not walk in public with his wife and pagan Chinese must mourn for their equals and superiors in relationship but are not required to mourn for their deceased wives."—Cleveland Universe-Bulletin.

"The world today has need of a physician. It has need of men and women who will be faithful to their ideals and who will, in this unequal struggle, in which the horizons are so dark, gaze to the Heavens and see in the darkness of the night the stars of Faith, Hope and Charity."—Most Rev. Francis J. Spellman, Archbishop of New York City.

Quote--End Quote

"Although the foreign missions have always been the object of our special interest and zeal, we cannot, in the light of our high office with which Providence has designated to entrust us, neglect the strengthening and consolidation of the Church in the home countries, upon which the success of the foreign missions so vitally depends."—Pope Pius XII.

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Proper Proportion

By REV. DANIEL A. LORD, S.J.

Father Getty of Pittsburgh tells of the act of faith and the sense of exact relationship displayed by his two little altar boys.

They were near the sacristy door as the priest lifted the ciborium prior to Holy Communion. One of them with roving curious eyes caught sight of someone who caused him the most intense excitement.

"Look," he whispered noisily, grabbing the other youngster's arm, "coming up the aisle—that's Conn, the heavyweight, that's going to fight Joe Louis tonight."

The other altar boy regarded him with disgust. With an emphatic thumb he pointed to the uplifted host.

"Look," he whispered in return, "that's God."

Father Richard Rooney of Boston was talking. "I got on the train," he said, "with a suitcase loaded with books and notes for the retreat I was to give. The porter lifted my bag and I could see him sag. But he mastered it skillfully, waded me into the Pullman and followed hauling the bag."

"With skill but obvious effort he slipped the bag under the seat. Then, said he, with a heavy sigh, 'Father, but what's you got in that suitcase? The Church?'"

Confessional stories can sometimes be very amusing. As was the one Father Rooney told me.

The gentleman on the far side of the confessional was in no state for confession. He had been operating and some queer instinct had brought him into the confessional and then stranded him there.

Again: Hysteria

By REV. JAMES M. GILLIS, C.S.P., Editor, The Catholic World

Last week in this column we had a brief discussion on the fact that the most hysterical of all great men in public life is the Pope. I had in mind while writing that little article principally diplomats, members of governmental cabinets, secretaries, editors of newspapers with millions of readers, presidents, senators in the stony, founders of progressive societies that insert whole page ads in the papers under some such provocative slogan as "What are we waiting for, Mr. President?" In a word I had in mind principally "big shots."

But there are also hysteria-mongers amongst the small fry, and in the long run it may turn out that the supposedly insignificant citizen can whip up more hysteria than the top-notchers.

There may be some who may be done to innocent men in war-time if you will read an article by J. Edgar Hoover in The American Magazine for August. Elsewhere I had seen a statement by Mr. Hoover that the F. B. I. of which he has charge, has under consideration 80,000 cases of alleged spies, conspirators, saboteurs, affix columnists and such. Ninety thousand, and we are not yet at war! How high the number of suspects will rise if we get into shooting, he does not indicate. He does report the significant fact that when we were in the first World War, 1917-1918, complaints averaged 1,600 a day, but that now the F. B. I. receives 3,000 a day!

The important question, however, is not upon how many persons, citizens or aliens, suspicion is fastened, but upon what ground the suspicion is based. Mr. Hoover gives a few samples: A worker in an airplane factory was reported as a spy because he wore a pedometer on his leg to see how far he walked each day; another man was reported as a spy because he read a great deal and kept an American flag in his window "when it wasn't the Fourth of July"; and a suspicion was cast upon them all by hysterical. 102 per cent Americans.

Miss G. C. says the head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, "not merely because they are amusing, but because they are examples of a growing mass hysteria, which, in the World War of 1917-18, resulted in the ostracism, bankruptcy, injury, and in some cases even the death of innocent persons." And he declares that now "war hysteria is more prevalent than it was twenty-three years ago." Obviously Mr. Hoover could not "go into cases" at great length. He is not writing an encyclopedia. But

he does tell of an "Italian shoe-repair man" who was persecuted and ruined by a whispering campaign. He was born in Italy but "was a good American citizen." The proudest moment of his life was when he took the oath of allegiance and received his citizenship papers. But the whisperers ruined him some time later. In this particular case they were helped by conspirators who stealthily painted a swastika on the shoe-repair shop window. This commission of suspicious deeds and wily conspirators was too much even for the F. B. I., which after investigation tried to set the rumors at rest. They succeeded, but too late. The poor Italian was ruined financially and disillusioned about the advantage of living in a "democratic" country.

Not the least important feature of this weird epidemic of "witch-hunting" is the skill with which politicians, business rivals and other personal enemies seize upon groundless suspicions and make them do service in ruining a rival or defeating a political opponent. It is ever thus, the simpleton who "means no harm" plays into the hands of the devil. In fact it would make an interesting investigation in the realm of psychology and morals if some research student were to inquire how far Satan could go if the ordinary citizen were to cooperate with stupid people. He is sick enough himself, but he always seems to need some gullible half-moron to help him in his work.

The cast cited in this article to which I refer tentatively as "Bessie's" are only a few of the ridiculous. They are largely tragic. Terrible consequences ensue from the placing of false suspicions upon guiltless persons. All of us who went through the trying period 1917-1918 in this country can readily understand the intense bitterness which was kindled upon perfectly good American citizens simply because they happened to have German names.

Now the hue and cry is on again, and worse than before. How can we deal with this ugly business of unjust suspicion? First, we must be more careful of all, but as our Catechism tells us, and back of the Catechism, every treatise on the Eighth Commandment warns us, the one who bears false witness against his neighbor will not go eternally unpunished. We Catholics have voluntarily cooperation from the world to do injury to another in his person or his reputation by starting rumors or stirring up suspicions. We have suffered too much along that line ourselves. And if no one else in America has explicit religious convictions about the "witch-hunting" we have. As a matter of fact true religion and hysteria are incompatible. Hysteria belongs to fanatics, not to us.

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A Novel of Convent Life

By REV. BENEDICT EHMANN

THE LAND OF SPIES. Kate O'Brien. (Doubleday, Doran)

About a year ago, Alyse Simpson's The Convent appeared as a nine days' sensation among the book club and lending library subscribers. Kate O'Brien's The Land of Spies may be accepted as a counterpoint to that novel. In its actual setting it is a metaphor of prayer; in the novel it is a metaphor of the religious life.

The Land of Spies describes ten years in the life of an English nun who has been chosen to be the spiritual director of a convent. The precise nature of her assignment is not revealed until a flashback near the end of the story, drove her at the age of eighteen into a wounded acceptance of the religious life.

The story opens after twenty-five years have already passed in her spiritual development, surviving the initial struggle and coming with ever clearer understanding to a knowledge of God's purpose for her. She has gained high place in her order by sheer merit and strict discipline. The convent of Rose Academy is the Irish house of her Order and was considered the most difficult of all the assignments under the authority of the Mother General in Brussels, principally because the growing Nationalist movement in Ireland and the general unrest of the Irish nation were unfriendly to the educational ideals of a French foundation.

As the story opens, she is preparing to resign because she is convinced that, after fair trial, she is not the woman for the post. It is the precise nature of the resignation that she is to give that she goes through the usual Sunday evening routine of "marks" for the girls and recitations of poems. An incident during this assembly draws her special attention to little Anna Murphy, the youngest child at the school, only five years old, and surely one of the most lovable children I have ever met in a novel.

It quite suddenly comes home to Reverend Mother that the tragedy of this little child's home life is that there is a safe and happy place where they can create a deep kinship between them. It is God's will that she should stay and be His warder for just such sensitive and generous souls as Anna, who are in

danger of blight from the hardness of the world. Against this duty the pressure of misunderstanding by her own religious or by the clergy should be counted as nothing. She accepts this indication as the will of God, and tears up the letter of resignation.

During the ten years which the story follows, Anna Murphy matures in a difficult and lonely way, with Reverend Mother always the careful but unobtrusive monitor. The book ends with Anna's winning of the scholarship to the University, and a dynamic scene in which Reverend Mother, who has just received a telegram announcing her appointment as Mother General, copes with Anna's aggressive and hard-bitten grandmother, who has other more pedestrian plans for the brilliant girl, and comes out victorious in defense of the scholarship.

The dramatic interest of this lovely novel centers in the problems and crises of the strange and winsome girl whose life interweaves itself so subtly with that of the veteran Reverend Mother. As an account of the development of these two characters, and in a gripping story. The secondary characters round it out into a life-size picture with admirable effect to the community—Mother Mary Andrew, Mother Felicia, and Mere Martin, in the school; Molly Redmond, the headmistress; Father O'Farrell, besides Charles, Anna's younger brother and best love, whose tragic death was a fierce crucible for her sturdy soul.

The book abounds in unforgettable incidents and vignettes of action, grave and hilarious. They make the story a natural "must" for all serious religious and their alumnae. Of particular interest in this connection is the chapter called "Chaplain's Concert." It is in the best tradition of Chaucerian and Shakespearean comedy—a howler, with "Laughter holds the world in leash." The author's sympathetic friends will chortle with glee over it.

We should welcome such a novel as this, which shows good people as interesting, and religious people as joyous. An observant theologian may quibble with a point or two, but the precise nature of these are only blemishes which do not obscure the story's main point, that the religious vocation is an adventure and a romance, a comedy, full of zest and of challenge to the spirit.

The Land of Spies is a wide Catholic reading for it stresses deep spiritual values without sacrificing the true aspect of life. By which I mean that its Reverend Mother is a genuine person, and not an impossible scarecrow of piety and its incidents are true to life, and not twisted counterfeits for "edification."

(The Land of Spies is in the Catholic Evidence Library)

Five Years Ago

—in the files of the CATHOLIC COURIER

From July 13, 1941, Edition

German Bishops. It was reported at Amsterdam, were thoroughly alarmed over the ultimate goal of Nazi policies with regard to the Church. The Bishops feared that the radical trend was definitely gaining in the Nazi Party. Reports of persecution were increasing. The religious trials were shown to be farces.

Although failing to cancel a bathing beauty contest conducted in an El Paso, Texas, public park under City Recreation Department auspices the vigorous Diocesan Council of Catholic Women protest against the event resulted in withdrawal of many business firms as sponsors, drew praise from these business firms as well as prominent El Paso citizens.

A successful three-day bazaar for the benefit of Mercy Hospital in Auburn was featured by an award to John J. Leo, prominent business man of that city.

Charges that the Catholic Church in the Philippine Islands was "opposed to democracy" which appeared in a national magazine in this country were quickly refuted by outstanding Jesuit writers and directors of Church activities in the Philippines.

The Most Rev. Jose Maria Gonzalez, Archbishop of Durango, Mexico, sent a strong letter of protest to President Caudenas against the expulsion of Fathers Benjamin Guzman and Rafael Aguilar, and the disappearance of a brother of the latter, another Catholic and a socialist after having been apprehended by Federal forces in Durango.

Feast Days

- Sunday, July 27.—ST. PASTORALEON.
- Monday, July 28.—ST. MARCELO AND CELSUS.
- Tuesday, July 29.—ST. MARTHA.
- Wednesday, July 30.—ST. ARDON AND BENNON.
- Thursday, July 31.—ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA.
- Friday, Aug. 1.—ST. PETER'S CHAINS.
- Saturday, Aug. 2.—ST. ALFONSSUS LIQUORI.

PAGE MY PASTOR

By Right Rev. Msgr. Peter M. H. Wynhoven
Editor-in-Chief, Catholic Action of the South

THE DAY WE CELEBRATE

Frances rushed out of the house to a waiting taxi, because she wanted to be on time for dinner at Mercedes' home. The guests of honor were the pastor and the missionaries who had just closed the men's mission.

When she arrived, she was greeted by Cedie, so happy she could hardly speak.

"Oh, Frances, this is a great day. Dad told us he will become a Catholic, and the boys went to Confession and Communion this morning."

"Cedie, how swell! And all this happiness this almost miraculous answer to prayers in one day!"

"Mother is so beside herself with happiness she doesn't know what she's doing. That accounts for the sudden invitations to this hurriedly prepared dinner—maybe no dinner at all. I don't know what the end result will be, but I was told to stay out of the kitchen and not to get in her way. She said she and the cook could manage. I've got my fingers crossed."

"Who wants to eat anyhow on a day like this?"

"Well, I'm sure the missionaries will. They look as if they take their nourishment on time, come what may."

"I imagine they have to with the constant stream of giving missions. Are they here already?"

"They're in the parlor with the pastor and Dad and the boys. I give you two guesses what they are doing."

"I don't think I need two guesses, Cedie."

"I suppose not. Fran Bob and John very seldom touch liquor. You know Dad was never much in favor of it, but a little while ago they declared unanimously that they needed something to settle their nerves. So, Dad said, 'O K boys, let's celebrate.'"

"The girls presently joined the happy gathering. Frances throwing her arms around Mr. Cambridge's neck for a long fervent embrace. Bob broke this up with a caution of feigned colicology."

"When there, Papa don't hog it all! Frances let go and, with tears in her eyes, kissed John and Robert."

"Look here, Bob! Mr. Cambridge said mildly 'I want you to understand that at my age I have a perfect right to hug my teacher.'"

"Your teacher?" Frances queried.

"Yes, Miss Sullivan," the pastor answered her "whether you know it or not you've been elected to make Mr. Cambridge go through his paces with the Catechism, that is, provided you can find the time."

"How did you achieve the honor, Father? Of course, I would be delighted to help a dozen lovely men like Mercedes' dad, but not the logical person for the task."

"Don't worry, Fran, I've been voted down for two good reasons: first, you are better qualified for the job and secondly, on account of my relation to the pupil, I might prove an ineffective taskmaster."

"Do you really mean, Father, that I should help Mr. Cambridge in his Christian Doctrine?"

"Yes, Frances, because the good missionaries here have convinced a couple more to inquire a little further into the claims of our religion. So I have my hands full."

"But nothing, Fran, Cedie interrupted. Teaching Catechism to Dad shouldn't prove too difficult. He must remember quite a bit of the lessons since he's always helped Mother hear our Catechism when we were little and I'm trying to get out of this proposition. I consider it a real honor and I'm sure it will be an immense."

"O K, angel, I believe you. Now what nights will serve for your class?"

"How about Wednesday and Saturday nights, Mr. Cambridge?"

"All right, dear teacher, quarter after seven, for one hour, please. Fine! I come here, and afterward Mercedes can run me home."

In her car, so I can finish my work when I have any."

At this juncture, Bob suggested with a smile that whenever he could spare the time, he'd drive Fran home.

Dinner was announced, and turned out to be a real feast, although it was somewhat hastily contrived.

Mercedes drove Frances home that night, and they sat for a long time in front of the house, discussing and rehearsing the developments of the day.

"Cedie, my head is in a whirl. It's all happened so suddenly."

"Do you know I noticed, Fran, that Bob seemed to be very much interested in anything you had to say. Looks like a conquest."

"All right, you tease; but to be honest with you, it seemed to me that he was unusually—well, friendly."

"It's no surprise to me, Fran. Bob's been secretly fond of you for years, but I suppose he was ashamed to make any overtures, knowing what you must have thought of him for neglecting his religion the way he did."

"Let's change the subject, Cedie. Much was said about your father's first Communion, but what about his Baptism?"

"That my dear doctor of Christian Doctrine, was thoroughly gone into by the pastor. My dad remembers when he was christened in the Protestant religion, and, according to his explanation, the pastor concluded that his Protestant baptism is valid, because it was correctly administered. You better get to bed now, otherwise Bob will get jealous of me for staying out so late with you. Good night, Fran, you're a darling."

Spiritual Thoughts

All wisdom is from the Lord God and hath been always with Him, and is before all time.

All wisdom is from the Lord God and hath been always with Him, and is before all time.

He that feareth God will do good and he that possesseth justice, shall lay hold on her.

Do not work so hard that you forget how to play, nor play so hard that you are not fit for work.

Life has so many lovely things to help you, that you can add sweet memories to our store every day.—M. S.

We ought to be persuaded that what God forbids, our Father grants to our salvation.—St. Augustine

Let your light shine before men, that they may see you are working and glorify your Father Who is in Heaven.—Matthew, C 14

It is not necessary to hope in order to act, nor to succeed in order to persevere.—George Duhamel

A typical American is one who makes money at the job he knows and loses it trying to get rich in a game he doesn't know.—Los Angeles "Times"

"To promote the peanut" Editorial headline. That is misleading sounds as though the organization contained only one Manchester "Union"

A fishing expert says bass will only bite when angry but how do you go about getting a fish good and sore at you?—Wilkes-Barre "Record"

What a world! You can't get a good job without experience, and by the time you get it, you are so old nobody wants you.—South Bend Tribune

Civilization Twenty years of peaceful toil to build wonders of use and beauty, one year of hate and rage to destroy them all.—New Orleans "Times-Picayune"

NOT COMPLETE WITHOUT IT

