



# AS WE SEE IT

By DAN PATRICK

Among other things last week was National Newspaper Week.

In Rochester it was observed by an enforced holiday on the part of the daily press—the first time in more than a century that this city of 230,000 found itself without a daily newspaper.

A dispute between the management and Typographical Union No. 15 precipitated the abrupt press silence which all but enveloped Rochester in a vacuum for 54 days.

Without going into the causes of the stoppage and the contentions of management and labor, this observance of National Newspaper Week was, unwittingly perhaps, the most striking and effective in the entire country.

It demonstrated, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the utter dependence of the American way of life on the daily newspaper.

It showed how a city of 230,000 can wander around in a state of confusion and whippersniff until its business almost ceases to function.

The course of life went unrecorded for nearly a week. Babies were born, men and women died and nobody knew about it. The endless stream of casualties flowed in from the battlefronts but the people never knew that the kid next door died a hero's death on the Siegfried line.

The great presidential debate was on but it might have been something they were doing in China so far as the people of Rochester were concerned. True, campaign oratory poured from the radio but nobody knew when or on what station. You can't very well follow a radio program without the listings in the daily newspaper.

In short, the whole life of the community became stagnant. There was no breeze from the daily press to spur it on.

The new-fangled people turned to various novenas without much success. Newspapers from other cities were snatched up as they appeared. Some of them gave splendid news coverage to all the world—except Rochester. Others, which were sold hardly merited the name NEWSPAPER.

Soon these newspapers went underground. Unscrupulous vendors asked forbidding prices to get their. Right and left they betrayed the public on the whole was an unmitigated disgrace. Steps should be taken to protect the public in the future against these vultures.

The radio tried manfully to fill the void, but it couldn't make the grade.

If anyone ever entertained the idea that radio will supplant the newspaper, he got his answer during the past few days in a resounding negative.

If radio does anything, it whets the appetites of its news-hungry listeners for a newspaper where all the details of the broadcast bulletins can be read and pondered-upon. No radio can take up the slack, at least in its present form.

A newspaper, then, is something pretty essential in our lives. It ranks with water, power, bread and electricity. Far from being a luxury, it is a bare necessity.

Those who publish newspapers, therefore, have a solemn duty to the public. Just as we cannot tolerate a pretentious break in our water mains or power lines, so also we cannot be exposed to a prolonged news blackout. Regardless of labor difficulties and other troubles which mount from time to time, newspaper publishers have a deep obligation to keep their readers informed thoroughly and regularly.

Whenever we take our daily newspapers and look for that matter, see much for granted.

We don't begin to realize the conditions of toil, sweat and sometimes tears that go up to make a daily newspaper. As we now realize, it would be a dismal world if we had to go through life without a daily record of what is happening around us.

That opposition might well be carried to the Catholic press which has become the watchdog of the Church through long and trying years. The very people who maintain they could get along very well without a diocesan Catholic press would be the first to yell "nuck" if publication were stopped.

Rochester has had a National Newspaper Week in this year of 1944 which will long be remembered.

Its observance has a multitude of lessons which might well take to heart. Not the least of these is that the press in America stands one of the last pillars of a free press in the entire world.

Unless we pay more attention to that treasure, it might well slip through our fingers and for a long time longer than 54 days.

## Feast Days

- October 11—TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.
- October 12—ST. HEDWIG.
- October 13—ST. MARGARET MARY ALCOCK.
- October 14—ST. LUKE.
- October 15—ST. PETER OF ALCANTARA.
- October 16—ST. JOHN BAPTIST.
- October 17—ST. HILARION.

# STRANGE BUT TRUE

## Little-Known Facts for Catholics

By M. J. MURRAY

**THE FAVORITE PRAYER BOOK OF THE LITURGICAL FOLK WAS THE BOOK OF HOLYERS, EXTRACTS FROM THE LITURGIES, THE BREVIAIRY, ETC. MANHATTAN—beautifully illustrated still sells.**

**NEWPORT, ENGLAND, Village Church.**

**WHOLE DUTY IT IS TO SUSTAIN BY EVERY LAWFUL MEANS THE VALIDITY OF A MARRIAGE WHICH IS CALLED INTO QUESTION.**

**DEFENDER OF THE FAITH (OF MARRIAGE)**

**WHOLE DUTY IT IS TO SUSTAIN BY EVERY LAWFUL MEANS THE VALIDITY OF A MARRIAGE WHICH IS CALLED INTO QUESTION.**

## The Literary Cavalier Book of the Year

Assemble the town crier! Ring bells in the steeple! King Jella at the doors of those who appreciate good things. Tell all men and sundry that D. B. Wyndham Lewis has finally turned in another book. Select your listener with care, or when you give it at Christmas, as I certainly shall, make sure that it is not to the thin-blooded or the Puritain. You know that another work by the author of *Francis Villon*, *King Spider* and *Charles de Europe* has finally reached this shore. As a matter of fact, it may be significant that two companies have published the work—*Concord*, and *His Times*, by D. B. Wyndham Lewis, Coward-McCann, Sheed and Ward, \$2.50.

No man in literature today can equal the spirit of a period as can Lewis. He knows France, he knows history, he knows—and this is most important—he knows humanity. He also is skilled in the interpretation of his characters and their texts, reaching the truth at all times and contemptuous of the Victorians and their vapid pagan heirs today, both within and without the Church.

Above all, Wyndham Lewis has with some times subtle, some times uproarious, often merciless and satiric. His wide scholarship, polished style, and sense of both devotion and humor rank his work amongst the foremost of our times.

**ONE OF THE GREATEST**

Pierre de Ronsard was born in 1524 and died two days after the Feast of the Incarnation, 1585. This master of French verse was thoroughly a man of his time. The classics he knew at an early age. He traveled a lot; he studied abroad. In later years he graced the French court, then at the pinnacle of his success. He was one of the greatest and one of the most prolific of all French poets.

"What an age of violent productive energy," says Mr. Lewis. "One thinks of Lope de Vega's fifteen hundred plays and Ronsard's fifty years of powerful rhyming—how he would have laughed at the complaint of a modern poet like A. E. Housman, after chiseling a few dainty trifles on cherrystones, that the 'continuous excitement' had left him—and the 300,000 sonnets which, it is computed, Europe produced in the 16th century alone."

Such was the Renaissance in Europe and while Mr. Lewis understands and enjoys its better things, he is quite aware of the evils. Nor does he hesitate to dispatch the writers of the last century and the pagans and the blind of our day, all of whom see the Renaissance in a wrong light, although through different eyes.

**KNOWS EUROPE**

The appreciation of tradition one merely glimpses in an impatient Belle is revealed more fully

Library Signpost By Rev. Benedict Ehmann

# FATHER GERARD M. HOPKINS, S. J.

One of the greatest lights of English literature is a Catholic priest of whom today most Catholics know nothing. As 1944 is the centenary of his birth, this is a good opportunity to do a little shouting from the house-tops, in the hope that a few will stop to take heed.



Father Gerard Manley Hopkins, S. J., was born on June 11, 1844, the eldest child of a family of eight, and was brought up in what might be called the moderate wing of the Church of England. Equally gifted in poetry and painting, he won a scholarship to Balliol College, Oxford, in 1863, where the air was still full of the echoes of Newman and Keble, and where the great Pusey and Jowett were still teaching. Hopkins' sensitive mind soon declared for what Newman had stood for, and he began a correspondence with the venerable Oxonian who was now in exile from his beloved campus. In 1866, he was received into the Catholic Church, after much doubting and soul-searching.

The calibre of his character may be gauged by his decision in 1868 to join the Jesuits. Following out the Jesuit principle of renunciation, he gave up all expression of his poetic talent, and for seven years no poem came from his hand. The silence was broken in 1875, with the consent of his superior, to commemorate the drowning of five shipwrecked Franciscan nuns who had been exiled from Germany by the Kulturkampf. "The Wreck of the Deutschland" is one of the supreme utterances of English literature, fully comparable to, and in some ways, surpassing the massive power of Francis Thompson's "The Hound of Heaven." The seven years' silence, with its urgent discipline and religious questing, had tensed his superb talent to a pitch of all-but terrifying energy.

He lived for fourteen more years, at various assignments of pastoral and professorial work, finding his "practical" responsibilities harder and harder to bear, subject to increasing bouts of melancholy, scrupulous to a fault in his observance of religious rule, sometimes giving in to the urge to put in poetry what things came his way, and then regretting the time that might better (so he thought) have been spent in priestly work, and coming at the end to a depression of spirits that was almost pathological. He died in 1889 at the age of forty-five, leaving to the world, in the grudging intervals he snatched away from his clerical work, a small body of poems which rank him (the verdict is not mine, but that of experts) next to Shakespeare as one of the shining glories of the English tongue.

Among those who love these remarkable poems, the question is debated, Did the discipline of the Jesuit rule spoil a poet who might otherwise have been, perhaps, a greater than Shakespeare? Those who say yes have much evidence on their side to lend a superficial plausibility to their stand. But these must surely note that, with all the unhappiness which his letters attest to, there was never the slightest defection from the spirit of his religious profession. You have constantly in his letters the sense that all his poems, even the greater ones that might have been, are not worth the salvation of one soul.

I stand with those who not only say no to the above question, but who affirm that his religious discipline grounded and galvanized his immense talent into a power of expression that far surpasses anything of the kind ever written before or since. It seems futile to argue what kind of poet the Jesuits took away from the world, when you see the kind of poet the Jesuits trained for God—a poet whose tremendous and now controlled talents wrestle with the most towering of all realities, the ineffable Reality of God.

I am not much concerned with the tremendous verses Hopkins might have written if the Jesuits had not gotten hold of him, when I have an enormously powerful verse like this which was the first to break the seven years' silence after the Jesuits had their way with him:

Thou mastering me  
God! giver of breath and bread;  
World's strand, sway of the sea;  
Lord of living and dead;  
Thou hast bound bones and veins in me, fastened  
me dead.  
And after it almost unmade, what with dread,  
Thy doing, and dost Thou touch me afresh?  
Over again I feel Thy finger and find Thee.

Or this other example whose rugged granite words bear the weight of God's immensity better than anything I know in poetry:

I admire Thee, master of the tides,  
Of the fore-flood of the year's fall;  
The recur and recovery of the gulf's sides,  
The girth of it and the wharf of it and the wall;  
Stanching, quenching ocean of a motionable mind;  
Ground of being, and granite of it; past, all  
Grasp God, throned behind  
Death with a sovereignty that needs, bodes but  
abides . . .

Because Father Hopkins was a Jesuit, he undoubtedly wrote fewer poems than he would otherwise have done. But it is very doubtful whether he would otherwise have composed with such burning intensity and such sublime insight without the discipline and the revelations that came to him from the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.

(Poetry quoted with permission of the Oxford University Press.)

Life is a gift. There is nothing small in it. For the greatest grow by God's law out of the smallest. But to the poor we give the smallest.