

Literary Cavalcade

By JOHN O'CONNOR

Guerrilla Padre Tells His Story

Friends who served in this war in the Pacific theatre have been turning home. Some, due to the nature of their education and their pre-army careers, worked in the silent services, intelligence or counter-intelligence. Their tales were many and always carefully told. Stories of contacts with jungle fighters behind the Jap lines . . . of maritime rendezvous . . . of "ornaments" that turned into "red strips" overnight . . . of codebooks being delivered in the Philippines . . . of guerrilla fires in the hills of Mindanao . . . of small secret camps in the heart of the misty jungles where the strange trails down and eyes watch from every vantage point.

And always, one heard of the "guerrilla Padre," the "guerrilla Padre."

Father Edward Haggerty, S.J., told his story and told it well in *Guerrilla Padre* (Longmans, \$2.75). The shadowy myth is finally being caught in the light of his own book.

Father Haggerty, born in Virginia, joined the Society of Jesus in 1927. Seven years later, he found himself teaching at the Ateneo de Manila. He spent his summers in the south, conducting Boy Scout camps in the hills of Mindanao. After another trip, he returned to assume the office of rector of the new college at Cayan. It was his intimate knowledge of the country and his innumerable friendships that stood him in good stead. "I guess I walked four thousand miles a year," he told me when I met him a week after Manila was freed. When I asked him for more interesting stories, he waved me aside. Camaraderie was still strong — and enemies are notoriously tactless.

And he has since returned to Mindanao. Slight, wiry, bald — latter fact being the center of a very amusing story — Father Haggerty is now Military Delegate for Catholic Chaplains on Borneo to Japan. But I suspect his heart is in Mindanao where reconstruction must somehow start on the five wrecked buildings of his proud little college and the charred remains of his church.

In *Christianity and the Market*, Michael de la Bedoyere makes a point that should cause us to think seriously of the future: how can we preach "the good news" to the millions who have seen nothing but hardship for the past six years? It will not be possible to do it convincingly except by getting down to the heart of things — and to give simple: in one eloquent passage the author catches this right. Listening to a radio message come in on hand-powered set in the heart of the jungle:

"I thought of our chapels in the villages and a fog descended and revelation opened my spirit — to have gone back to that — back to the days that are chafed with scars defied by wandering men, to rough-shaven, pain-

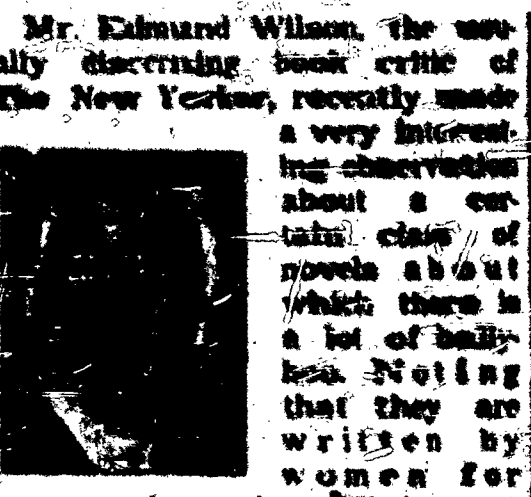
less altars, to hideous hand-carved statues, to dirty vestments stained by the rain and the sweat of the caregivers, to the coconuts for candles, to the half-grasped dialects of the people, to the ignorance and superstition and indifference of so many of the worshippers, to the mud and the hunger, the drenchings, the sweat and weariness of the hike, the floor for sleep, the bite of the insects and the itch of unwashed clothing — was God, to go back day after day to that? But such feelings come to all of us here and now and such feelings pass. For we all know — and feeling it deep within us — it is usually unspoken — that our religion is a stronger, more enduring force than the peeling of an organ or the headdress of a ceremonial. We know it is the light that illumines all the mind and the grace that moves and stiffens the will — that it is a peace the world cannot give and the only hope in a world that wars; that to nations that are grasping must come the charity of Christ, to nations that are proud, the humility of a God made man, to nations that are cruel the loving kindness of Christ; that we, insignificant though we be, are the true forces that must lead men to reel-

in their brotherhood in Christ and their universal sonship in God. Peace conferences and economic plans can bring no lasting peace unless we, the preachers of Christ's gospel, have first prepared the hearts of men. And so today and tomorrow, and the next day, in beauty or in equal, we will go on. The Church grew more vigorously in the Catacombs than it did beneath the great dome of Michelangelo. . . .

"Balle-balle, come back again," the people told him when at last he was ordered home. His tale was told — and while I may seem to have emphasized the spiritual, the adventure theme in this book is a sustained thrill for hundreds of pages. Yet to the author and the reader there will always remain the vision of " . . . the sick and the dying, the naked guerrillas waiting on the hills to ambush the prowling enemy . . . the mutilated dead under wooden crosses on the hills — soldiers in shorts, carbines strapped on their shoulders as they served Mass, villagers afloat . . . the shattered Cathedral with its blackened altar."

"But in the hills — in the hills with us — the altar and the flag were always there."

Library Signpost  
New Fiction Ballyhoo



Mr. Edmund Wilson, the usually discerning book critic of *The New Yorker*, recently made a very interesting observation about a certain class of novels about which there is a lot of ballyhoo. Noting that they are written by women for women, he says, "The great thing about this kind of fiction is that the heroine must seem like a woman, and a woman, as many of our readers know, is a woman: she must be sexually desirable and successful, yet a competent professional woman; she must have delightful picturesque adventures, yet attain the highest social position; she must be able to break men's hearts, yet be capable of prodigies of fidelity; she must have every kind of worldly success, yet rise at moments to the self-sacrifice of a saint. She must, in fact, have every possible kind of cake and message to eat — to eat it is held for masculine readers, also, by periodically denuding the heroine and writing euphemistically of her sexual appetite."

The remark about which this comment is directly concerned is *The Turnstone* by Anne Scott. "Arid rubbish" (according to Mr. Wilson) which has not even the rankness of the fustian trash.

What are we to make of the fact that some of the most popular speculations of "the fustian trash" are also "by women" and apparently "for women," with a frequent glance toward the men who "all seem to qualify as walves? The usual rubbish of these are *Forever Amber* and *The Signet Ring*. The long and short of these weird, concocts of pornography may have a funny side, but it mainly displays us on this side of the Atlantic as gullible and untrained in a kind of fixed adolescence. Surely it was no merit of her book which made the author of *Forever Amber* a sort of national celebrity. The book lacks style, wit and depth. It isn't even within meaning distance of being a work of art. And yet the handwagon keeps bumping along with all kinds of success on advertising which includes such unrelated matters as the author's good looks.

The publicity for *Forever Amber* is even more calculated. She has had a hand in a Hollywood picture

or of a very tidy sum. Her picture went the rounds, to show her as even more beautiful than Katherine Winsor, the *Alibi* queen and downcast eyes giving a spec of modesty to the selective collector. A great noise was made over the request to reduce the voluptuous proportions of the mannequin figure on the dust-cover of the book. It is not rash judgment to regard all this as keeping a sharp eye on what makes people stampede the leading libraries and book stores.

The making of books has become a big business calculated to whip up the demand with every appeal except the legitimate one of genuine artistic merit. With their vocabulary of superlatives and frenzied adjectives spent on books like these, what is there left for the publishers (and many of the critics) to say for the really good book that occasionally comes their way?

I do not mean this as a blanket indictment of all publishers or all critics. But who is safe when such a reputable firm as Macmillan's, with many of our finest Catholic books on its catalog, will stoop to publish such a low level of *Forever Amber*, and not only that, but also to play with double-talk in its advertising of it? Mr. Douglas Woodruff, the general editor of the *London Bulletin*, makes a point of the protest there would be if the traffic signal stayed *Forever Amber*. It is to be hoped that Macmillan's have warned the book traffic for a few years from the direction of better standards in our literature.

My readers may take all this as an elaborate way of warning not make the mistake of thinking they must be good because so many people are reading them. Tens of thousands of dollars were spent on ballyhoo to build up that stampede; once it was started the publicity agents could depend on the bankruptcy of human nature to do the rest.

A similar warning should be given about Elizabeth Janeway's *Being Lonely*, though with this difference (to give credit to the author) that the style is more genuine; the character analysis which goes on throughout the book is, however, more or less reading a book that would be an example of the kind of novel mentioned above.

Catholic Information  
All That Glitters is Not Gold

There is quite a bit of armug satisfaction in being able to tell your friends that you "live by the Golden Rule." The Golden Rule is all right as far as it goes. But it doesn't go far enough. It tells you how to stand in the good graces of your neighbor. It doesn't tell you how to stand with God.

There is a good fellow well met. You may be the most popular tenant in your apartment, but if you don't pay your rent you are Public Enemy No. 1 to your landlord. In our normal life there are inevitable obligations to be fulfilled, certain deadlines to be met. And God is not going to be satisfied with the whole matter because you can give your neighbor a hearty thump on the back.

In the business world the Golden Rule is left outside the office with our coat and hat. In baseball or bridge we hold fast to the advantages derived from a balk or a ringer. Even in our social contacts we are remorselessly conscientious about Emily Post. But when it comes to morality — give us the Golden Rule!

If we would but unravel the gay trappings of this Rule we would discover that all that glitters is not golden. What we actually find is a hard core of moral conscientiousness. For in substance it means that you are free to cast aside one by one God's eternal truths, to dictate the terms of your soul's contract, to make your own rules for the game of life. Such a code would not work with your business and

mates and friends. You can be pretty sure it won't work with God either!

That is why the Catholic Church has no place for the Golden Rule in her scheme of things. The business of saving souls is serious. God has set down all the rules and requirements, and the Church is going to run a black market. Her basis is the 'dogmatic.' Her morals 'rigid.' She is the strict landlord who demands our monthly payment. But in return she guarantees that you sit at the table in the Kingdom of Christ (Lk. 22:30). That's the way everyone wants the Church to be. For after all, the Golden Rule is not so much a guide of behaviour as a justification of misbehaviour. — (Catholic Information Society of New York.)

Ex-Chaplain to Study Under GI Program

Washington — (NC) — One of the first discharged Army Chaplains to take advantage of the GI Bill of Rights to continue his schooling is the Rev. George A. King, S.J., formerly of Boston College, who has entered Georgetown University here. He is working for a doctorate in political science.

The Rev. Engelbert Axer, S.J., who was enroute to Tokyo to join the faculty of the Catholic University there when war broke out, has also enrolled at Georgetown while waiting to carry out his original mission. When established 24 years ago, the Catholic University in Tokyo was decided to Georgetown in order to give the new school a guarantee of protection.

Contest for Prize GI Tales of Missions Opens

Chancellor — (NC) — Twelve prizes for stories of missionary heroism collected from members of the U. S. armed forces are offered by *The Shield*, monthly magazine of the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade. It was announced in the February issue. The stories may be written by members of the armed forces or by others to whom they are told. Each story must deal with the work of a Catholic missionary during World War II in places disturbed by the war. Limit of length is 500 words and preference will be given, the announcement said, to stories not previously published. The contest will close March 30.

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